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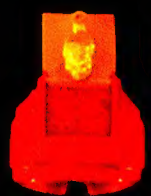
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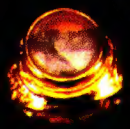
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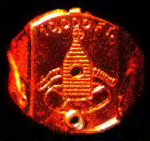
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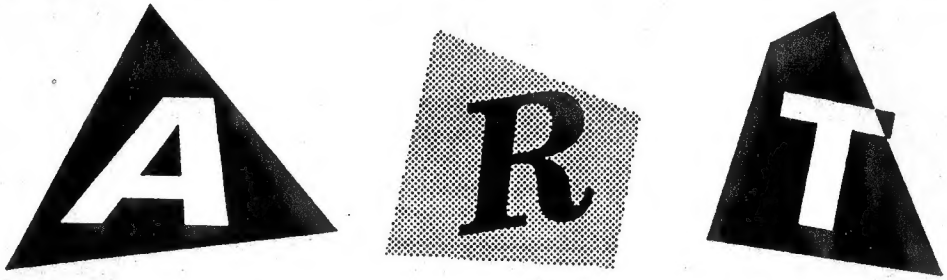

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COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

Issue #21
January-February 1993

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ON THE COVER:
A collage of Classic Atlas/Marvel Monster Covers
(see page... 24).

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Issue Number 21, January- February 1993

The Big News...?!

This is the last issue of *CBM* (#21). Why you may ask? Well, as many have already heard "through the collector grapevine", I am very happy to publically announce that I was recently selected for the position of Editor-In-Chief of Overstreet Publications. This genuinely amazing turn of events has been nothing short of mind boggling, to say the least! To begin with, there are, no doubt, multitudes of qualified candidates with much more extensive editing experience than I. Yet Bob Overstreet has decided to break with the publishing world status quo and fill the position with someone of a decidedly collector oriented mindset. Considering the general trend of most comic book related publications today, this "pioneering" approach deserves some credit (for bravery if nothing else). At any rate, I'll be assuming my duties beginning in January, thus the sudden cancellation of *CBM*.

To further astound and amaze you, Bob is discontinuing the *Overstreet Update* with issue #25, and starting a "brand new" magazine called *Overstreet's Comic Book Marketplace*. He agreed to use the *CBM* title at my request because I hated to see the *Marketplace* name totally disappear. It may seem a small thing to some, but seeing the *CBM* name endure, even with a different format, was very important to me.

Incredible as it seems, there is a third bit of news worthy of mention. In the planning stages right now is a special publication that will start up where this one leaves off. *CBM* subscribers will shortly be receiving a letter containing more information about this exciting new magazine for advanced collectors, as well as the disposition of your present subscription. Watch for it sometime in February. For those who have submitted articles that have yet to see print, I hope you will be patient a little longer. With your permission, I plan to publish them in the near future, as soon as our schedule permits.

Looking back to January 1991, I can't help but feel you and I accomplished something worthwhile with the 21 issues of *CBM*. We sent a clear message to other comic book publications that there are tens of thousands of us who love reading and collecting comics for reasons that go way beyond their monetary value. And what's more, they listened...

We demonstrated that their is a vast army of enthusiastic adult collectors, eagerly interested in reading intelligent and thoughtful articles. Articles that not only address the historical and literary content of comics, but also celebrate the sheer joy and fun of comic book collecting...

We even laid the foundation for a professional association, that will, for the first time, establish ethical standards for buying, selling, and grading comics. We did all these things, and more, by simply writing about and sharing what we know and love about comic books with each other...

Your support of *CBM* will always be deeply appreciated. Best,

Gary

Gary M. Carter

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

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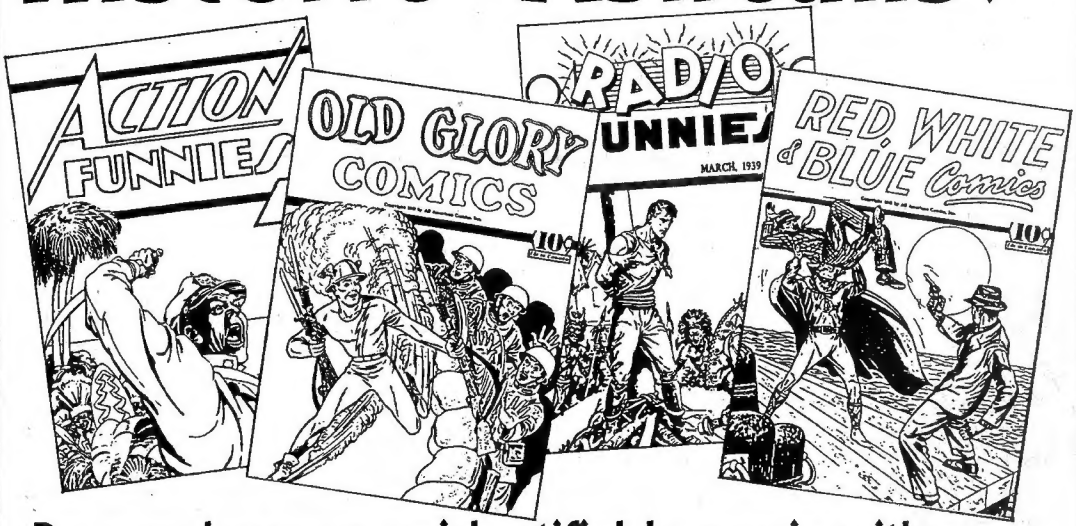

Do you have an unidentifiable comic with an odd black & white cover and color interior?

It may be an historic "ashcan!"

In the early days of comic book publishing, there was a never-ending battle between highly competitive businessmen to lay claim to every conceivable comic book title. In order to properly register the title with the copyright office in Washington DC, publication of the book was required.

In the heat of competition, crafty comic book publishers developed a system to fool the government into believing that the book had been produced. They produced "ashcan" comics! These "imposters" existed only for legal registration and were never sold.

"Ashcans" usually had black and white covers (often Velox prints) stapled to color interiors from previously printed comics.

One "ashcan" comic was rushed to the copyright office in Washington DC to register the title and logo art. Another was placed in the publisher's files. Often extra "ashcans" were made and given to editors and other employees as souvenirs. Sometimes these rarities surface in today's comics collector marketplace.

In recent years the collector's market has been deluged with a flood of objects tagged as "ashcan" comics. These contemporary previews and mini-comics are not the real thing.

Genuine historical "ashcans" are by definition among the rarest of comic books.

If you aren't sure that the book you have is an "ashcan" or not — please call me at **800-344-6060**. I'll help you identify your book and gladly make an offer.

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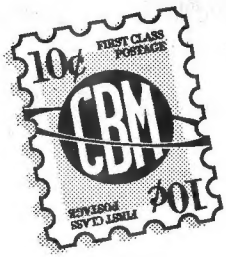

Ashcan Action

Just got the newest CBM... another great issue. There always seems to be at least one "special" item in each issue, this time it was the Ashcan Action #1! No wonder Gary Colabuono is so enthusiastic about these items! This cover is unbelievable!!!

Dan Flemming, Kansas

It was great! Check out Jerry Jacobs discovery in this issue's Fandom Flashbacks... it's pretty "special" too!

The End Of The Silver Age

I wish I could say that I've loved your publication from the start but I only heard about it's existence four issues ago. Congratulations on making a wonderful and necessary magazine.

I guess I'm not from the "old school" of comic book collectors as I have only been collecting for about ten years (I was born in '69) so maybe I don't have the clout to say what I'm about to say, but here goes. Since I've been infatuated with this hobby there has always been something that has nagged at me. It is this: We know the "Golden Age" of comic books began around the early forties and ended around the late forties. We know the "Silver Age" began in the fifties either with Showcase #4 or Detective #225... okay... But where does the Silver Age end??????

It has been pushing nearly 20 years that we have called more recent books "present". I believe it is time for some authority to say "This is the dawning of a new era!" We would be able to say that any books from, oh, say 1975 and up to be in the "bronze" or "copper" age. I believe that this transition (and there was one) in comics should be pointed out and delineated .

Imagine if you will, someone living in the twenty-first century having to say that his Hulk 181 or some book on the same order is from the "present-age" of comic books even though the book could be more than sixty-years older than him/her!

Anyway, I'm sure this has been brought up before and hopefully will be brought around until someone decides to nail it down.

For what it's worth, maybe we could call the stuff that's coming out nowadays the "plastic" age... ha-ha...

Laurence Herman, California

A general chronology (with admittedly many biostorical exceptions) that I proposed several years ago may help. 1933-1938: Pre Golden Age, 1938-1945: Golden Age, 1946-1949: Post Golden Age, 1950-1955: Pre Silver Age, 1956-1969: Silver Age, 1970-1979: Post Silver Age (some call it "Bronze Age"), and 1980-present: "Modern" or "Recent" Age. Ultimately, after research and study, each collector will make his own judgement about these arbritary labels. I feel that the fact that there is no absolutely definitive answer to many of these basic historical questions makes the hobby all that much more exciting and fun to discuss. What do you think?

Ditko Dilemma

Received CBM #19 today. I sat down and read it cover to cover and enjoyed it immensely.

Re: Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr.'s letter concerning Ditko's first published story. Jim states: "So when other data surfaces (Like Bruce Hamilton's claim that he wrote Ditko's first story and that it was in Fantastic Fears #5), we should be prepared to give it some credence. Therefore the guide's "1st Ditko story" does not imply a second story in the same issue, but is a substantial claim to being Ditko's first professional work, even if it appeared after (per cover date) his work in Black Magic."

1. Overstreet's notation in Price Guide #22 after Black Magic #27 (Nov-Dec 1953) is: "Ditko-a (1st in comics); also see Fantastic Fears #5. Turning to Fantastic Fears #5 (Jan-Feb 1954) Overstreet states "1st Ditko story is written by Bruce Hamilton... (early Ditko-a, see Black Magic #27)"

2. To add to the confusion, some references suggest that there are two Ditko stories in Fantastic Fears #5, however my copy has only one Ditko story.

3. My copy of Fantastic Fears #5 (Jan-Feb 1954) has a store arrival date stamped on the back cover of "Oct. 26, 1953". Unless Black Magic #27 (Nov-Dec 1953) was not released until early November (which is possible, but very unlikely), I feel there is little doubt that Black Magic #27 contains Ditko's first published story. Whew!

Tim Hessee, Kansas

You make a strong case, Tim. If only Steve Ditko himself would set this matter to rest for all of us. In the mean time, I plan to make sure my collection contains both Fantastic Fears #5 and Black Magic #27, just in case. Thanks for your excellent analysis and research.

Freddy & Mac: An Appreciation

In most comic book articles I read, the author starts out with a remembrances in which he mentions the first time he came across whatever particular subject about which he's writing. It's usually the first comic he ever bought, or the first title with which he became involved. It is a moment ingrained in his memory forever. It is told in an arresting manner and with an abundance of detail. Me, I haven't a clue.

I can't remember the first comic I purchased (or the first one that was purchased for me), but I'll never forget the feeling I had when I read my first Mac Raboy Captain Marvel Jr. story (the details of said story are, of course, lost in the mists of time): Here was something completely different and quite new to me.

As best I can recall, the story was a reprint that was included in one of DC's special 100-page editions or something similar. The book's other tales were what I expected at the time. The new stories were presented in the familiar dynamic and action-packed manner; the old stories (Golden Age? What's that?) had this primitive, "cartoonish" art and stories much too simple for

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my sophisticated adolescent mind. All the characters had beefy muscles, spoke in exclamation points, and had big expressive orbs for eyes. Looking back, I now recognize the simplicity and sublimity in each word and pen stroke that was somehow overlooked in the haze of my preteens.

However, there was one story whose worth I recognized immediately.

It had a hero very close in age to myself, with slender, realistic musculature, and intense, brooding eyes. "What's this?!" I thought to myself, "Someone has stuck a real person in this costume...a real kid!"

What was different about this "Junior" piece was that it seemed Freddy and his alter ego retained their humanity, while all the characters around him were rendered in that cartoon-like, melodramatic "Golden Age" mode. There was an unbelievable photo-realism to the boy's face, in both guises. The impression I got at the time was "Now here's an artist who puts extra-special care in the portrayal of his hero and treats him with respect."

The as-yet-unknown artist certainly had an abundance of rich subject matter from which to draw: the bright costumes, the mystical origins, the colorful villains. At the same time, care was also taken when portraying the many metropolitan skyscrapers and tenements looming in the murky night. That an artist was able to portray such realistic settings in addition to the more fantastic story elements was not lost on me, even then. Every panel of Freddy out selling his papers was like a snapshot of the city streets. The dark alleys and deep shadows even reminded me of my then-favorite hero, The Batman.

I had not learned the name of the artist until many years later, when I purchased my first Overstreet Price Guide. Not only did I now have a name to put with the pictures, I discovered yet another facet of Raboy's talent. It was perhaps the brightest facet of all: the World War II era covers for Master Comics and Captain Marvel Jr. comics. Somehow Raboy had managed to walk the fine line between "patriotic" and "jingoistic" in his unabashedly propaganda-style covers. With all due respect to Alex Schomburg and his powerful Marvel covers, nothing before or since has had such an impact on me as those wartime CM Junior covers. It's impossible to overlook the visual impact of Master Comics #27's "Victory" cover, or #33's "Swats the Swastika" cover, or the "Statue of Liberty" cover of #36. There are, of course, many more examples; too many to mention here. Suffice to say that Mac Raboy had the Midas touch when it came to a Captain Marvel Jr./WW II cover combination.

Perhaps this was the true mastery of Mac Raboy: his pencil was equally at home in Freddy Freeman's dimly-lit apartment, in the midst of World War II, and in the middle of a super-hero universe. It's a remarkable accomplishment from an artist whose work first made me aware of the comics and creators that had come before, and of the rich legacy that remains, waiting to be rediscovered by the next generation. I would give much to have that first Junior storyline etched in my mind, but I'll have to settle for regaining my memory one issue at a time.

So, thank you for the worlds you have given us, Mac Raboy. Your work will not soon be forgotten.

Michael Dobosz, Massachusetts

What a wonderful tribute to a wonderful artist. You have beautifully expressed much of my personal sentiments about his genius, and, I suspect, many other Raboy fans. Thank you for sharing it with CBM readers!

Tough Books

I have also been meaning to write to you to say that it was great meeting you and Lisa at the San Diego Con this year. This was my first time at the San Diego Con and I was definitely impressed by it. I will definitely be there next year.

Unfortunately I was only able to attend the last two days of the Con, so I did not do much else other than forage through the dealers room trying to fill my ever expanding want list. Next year I will definitely attend the full 4 days so I can partake in some of the other events going on.

As a budding 1950s collector, I knew that many of the books I was looking for (Congo Bill, Phantom Stranger, Danger Trail, and various Atlas titles) would be difficult to find. I figured that any such books still around when I arrived at the Con on Saturday were likely to be "picked through", which was indeed the case.

The biggest surprise of the Con was discovering that the books I expected to be the hardest to find, were more available than other books on my want list that I thought would be easier to find. The following is a list of books from my want list

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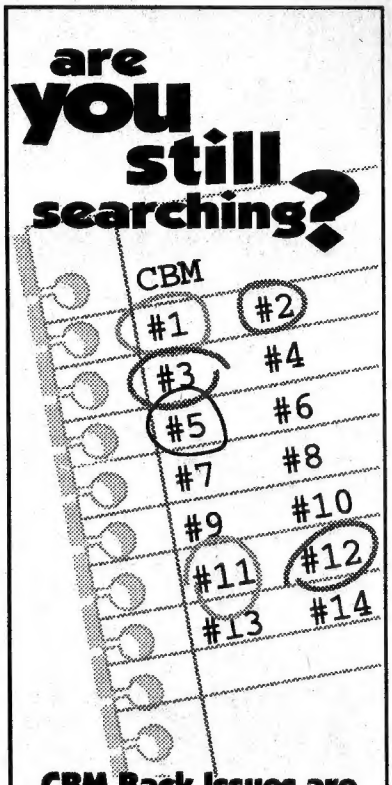

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#18 Basil Wolverton; Superman; 1st Dealer
#19 Enemy Ace; Wrath of the Code
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continued from page 9

that I am having a very difficult time locating:

Menace (Atlas) - the only issues that I found were pedigreed copies, which were selling for about 5X guide.

Strange Worlds (Atlas) - There seem to be plenty of #1's around but issues #2-5 have proven to be very difficult to find. The only issue I found was a #4 in real low grade.

Speed Carter Spaceman (Atlas) - Same situation as with Strange Worlds. I found a #1 months ago but have not seen issues #2-6 for sale anywhere. I did find a #4 at San Diego in VG condition, priced about 3.5X guide.

Black Knight (Atlas) - Another Atlas title that is extremely tough to find in any grade. I have seen a few super low grade copies of #1 for sale but have seen very few of the other four issues for sale.

Sensation #107 and #108 (DC) - these first two issues of the mystery format Sensation Comics have proven to be a major challenge to find. I have put together a run of Sensation Mystery (#110-#116), and have even found several copies of Sensation #109 for sale, but have had considerable more difficulty finding these first two mystery format issues. (Quick side note: Sensation #109 takes my vote as a true "classic" comic book cover.)

Star Spangled #123 through #130 (DC) - Like the mystery format Sensation Comics, these Ghostbreaker (Dr. 13) issues of Star Spangled Comics have proven to be very difficult to find as well. Issue #122 (first Dr. 13) is definitely the easiest to find of the run and I hear that #130 is the toughest. I saw the Mile High Copy of one of the these issues (I forget which number it is) and it is certainly a stunning book! A dealer had a few nice copies from this run at San Diego that I passed on when I first arrived at the con on Saturday and were sold when I went back to get them on Sunday. How many times will I have to kick myself for doing this!!

Adventures of Rex the Wonder Dog (DC) - Marked in the Guide as "Scarce" and it certainly is. I am just getting interested in this series and the only issues I saw at San Diego were a #3 (VG) and a #11.

Millie the Model Annuals (Marvel) - As a collector of Marvel Annuals, I have tried to add these to my collection since Marvel did release 12 Millie the Model Annuals between 1962 and 1975. The early Millie Annuals are in the same square-bound format as the more commonly known Marvel superhero annuals from the same period. I am beginning to think that these books are some of the hardest Silver Age books to find in any grade. Very scarce stuff.

Night Nurse - I have seen this book mentioned in the past as the oddball Marvel 70s title. I have looked and looked and cannot find it anywhere, let alone in high grade. I did manage to find a #2 and #3 at San Diego in VG.

To finish, I'll say that I am finding the recent discussion in CBM about the scarcity of DC 100 Page Super Spectacular #5 (Love Stories) absolutely fascinating. I have spent the past year seeking out obscure and scarce 70s DC titles but this one certainly sounds like it is in a class by itself in regards to scarcity. I had a devil of a time finding a Ghosts #1 in nice condition and thought I'd found the ultimate oddball comic when I found a copy of The Dark Mansion of Forbidden Love #1 in NM condition. I am still looking for NM copies of Witching Hour #1 and Weird War #1 but at least these books are gettable. DC 100 Page Super Spectacular #5 does sound to be (almost) ungettable.

I wonder how many copies of DC 100 Page Super Spectacular #5 there really are out there. Perhaps you can start a checklist going with your readers like you are currently doing with FF #2. A spotlight article in CBM on the book would also be great so interested fans could see what the book looks like. I will be keeping my eye out for a copy of this comic but do not have much hope of finding one, although I would imagine that there are collectors of romance comics out there that may have copies. It is also entirely possible that if enough attention is directed at this book, that copies will begin to surface (probably selling for very high prices). I'd probably pay 10x guide for it.

Anyway, that is all for now. Thanks again for the space. Take care and best of luck to you and CBM.

Andy Marinkovich, California

Thanks for sharing your list with us. I have also found every single item you name to be very difficult to locate, even mid grade copies. I hope your hypothesis is correct and more of the 100 page SS #5s surface. We have received an inordinately large amount of mail requesting further info on this "oddball" square bound book, so your suggestion is well taken. Nice to hear from you , Andy. And speaking of the Fantastic Four #2 survey, here are the results: To date, we have received 134 xeroxes of this Marvel book, some owners even have two copies! Thanks to all who took the time and expense to participate.

Mostly Creig Flessel Data

Here's a little more comic book "numerology" for historians and collectors:

Funny Pages vol. 2 #1 (Sep 1937) has vol. 2 no. 2 on title page and vol. 2 no. 1 in the indicia.

Funny Pages vol. 2 no. 2 (Oct 1937) has vol. 2 no. 3 on title page and vol. 2 no. 2 in indicia.

Amazing Mystery Funnies (Nov 1938 and Dec 1938) are both number "3".

September 1940, and October 1940 issues are both number "3" issues.

Superman #75 (Mar/Apr 1952), some issues have #74 on front cover.

Comic Book Marketplace #19 (Nov 1992) has #20 in the Table of Contents.

Here also, is a list of some Creig Flessel comic book work published prior to Detective Comics #1 (Mar 1937):

More Fun #9, #10 (May 1936, centerspread - Fishy Frolics by Fless), #11 (Jul 1936, centerspread - The ole Swimmin' Hole), #12 (Aug 1936, Pep Morgan story), #13, #14, #15, #16 (Dec 1936) & #17 (Jan 1937) Pep Morgan, and Bradley Boys stories, and #18

Star Ranger #1 (Feb 1937, Trouble hunters, Silver Saddle, and Lariat Law stories)

New Comics (New Adventure) #5 through #13 (Jun 1936 through Feb 1937) Steve Conrad stories.

CBM gets better and better! Congratulations on your "2nd" twentheth issue!

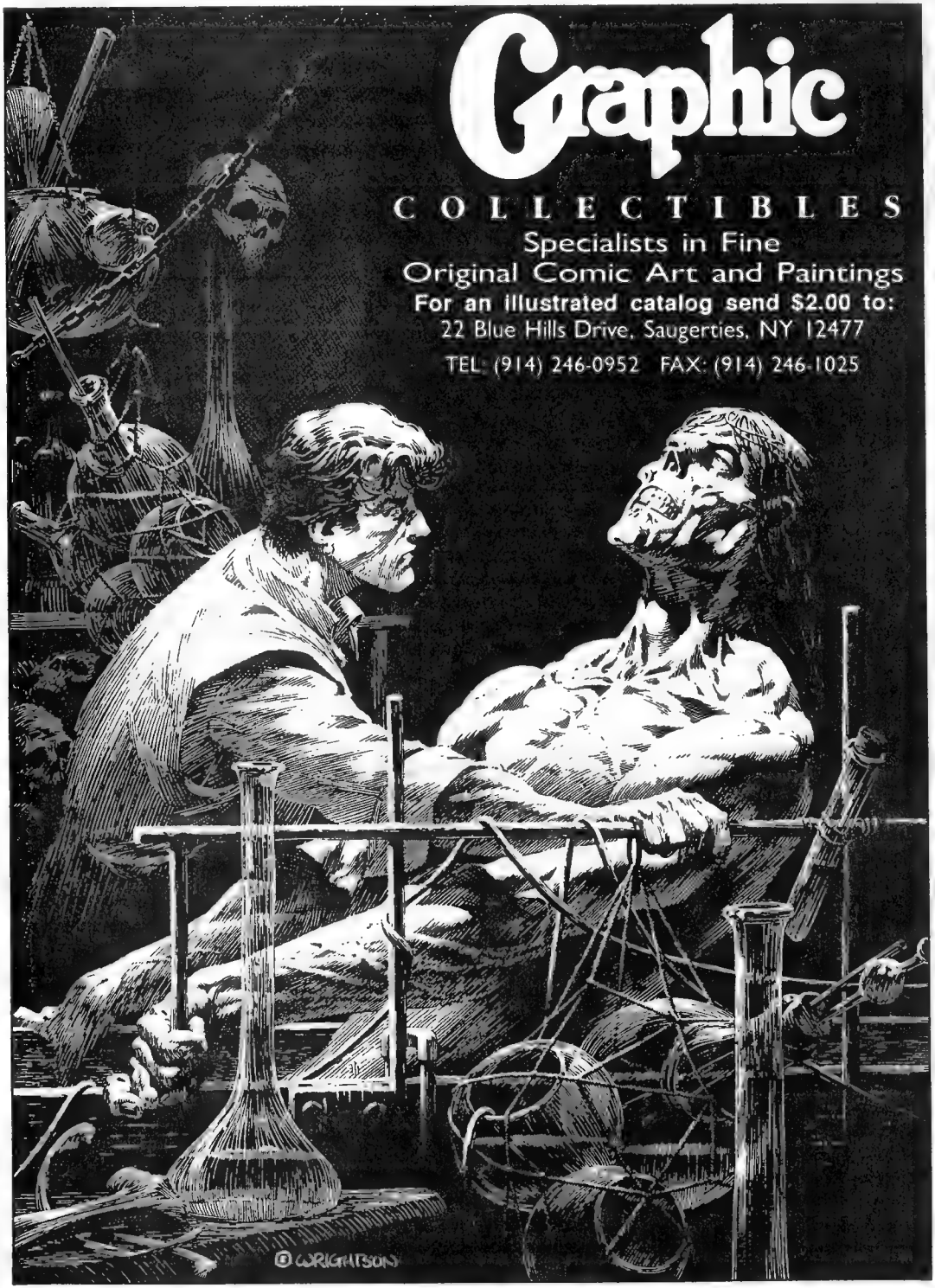
Michael Sanchez, California

Thanks for your latest research, Michael. I originally considered numbering every issue of CBM #20… but Lisa wouldn't let me!

Garage Sale Giveaway

This past weekend, my wife Denise and I decided to have a yard sale. Since we are moving to our new home later this month, we decided to get rid of some junk and maybe pay for our moving expenses with the money we would make.

continued on page 12



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MARKETPLACE MAIL

continued from page 10

The sale started at 7am (believe me, people were waiting at 6am) and at about 7:15am a ten year old boy and his father showed up asking if I had any comics for sale. I had put an ad in the local paper about the yard sale mentioning things like plates, clothes, videos, bikes and comic books, just to see what response the books would get.

I went into the house and brought out about 60 books mostly Silver Age Marvels and DCs which were in about Good/Very Good condition. These books had all been upgraded in the last five or six years, and I was planning on taking them to a dealer and trade them in.

When I brought out the box, the young man's eyes flew open, and as he was going through the box, he kept saying "I don't believe it, Jack Kirby's Fantastic Four" (I put a run of FF #60-80 in the pile).

Finally he very meekly asked how much and I replied "are you a collector" and he said "OH yes sir, I read any I can, but I've never actually owned any books from the 1960s." With that I said, "Hows 10¢ a book sound?"

Well it felt really good. I mean I could have said $3 a book and I'm sure he would have spent his $6 on two books and would never have complained. But heck, to get a young collector started on the Silver Age... one who wasn't interested in Mint condition Punishers or Wolverines, but in the story and art work, as well as the time period... it was to much to pass up. I have to give credit to Dr. Keith Contarino for the idea in an earlier issue of CBM, when he gave an issue of FF #48 to a young Silver Surfer fan. I think it's a great idea for "older" fans to provide opportunities for younger fans to enjoy the older books, not for what they may be worth, but for what's inside them. I also gave the boy, the last three years of TBG and some famous first editions (Action #1, Batman #1, etc.) for free (sorry my Comic Book Marketplace back issues are to valuable to me!) Thanks again Gary, for such a great publication.

Gary Hackenburg, North Carolina

Thanks Gary for being a true comic book fan. The young lad in your anecdote will no doubt remember your kindness for the rest of his life.

Solo Robin

I've just finished reading #20 of your fine magazine, and I must say this magazine never ceases to amaze me. "The Unknown Batman & Robin" article was especially enjoyable because I've known for some time about Batman and Robin's stint in the pages of Star Spangled Comics. I've often felt that this was a daring move on DC's part to feature Robin in solo adventures in a non Batman comic while other side kick heroes were only seen in the comics with their mentor/partners. But when Batman was added to the Robin feature of the comic it's a sign to me that Robin as solo stories did not sell or generate enough interest without Batman in the story. It's unfornate that this may have been the case in the late 1940s, because in the 1990s the current Robin, the Boy Wonder (Timothy Drake) has had three mini-series and is more popular than ever with or without Batman.

"The Fun-tastic World of Hanna-Barbera Comics" article was also super. The article brought back a lot of memories for me as I watched Hanna-Barbera cartoons in the 1960s and 1970s on television religiously .

Finally, I would like to see articles discussing Magnus, the Robot Fighter and Dr. Solar, Man of the Atom (published by Gold Key and by Valiant). They are extremely popular right now.

Michael Leon, New York

So would I...any volunteers? Other scarce Gold Key books that are in very high demand as of late are: Atom Ant, Secret Squirrel, Astro Boy, Jetsons, Space Ghost, Tasmanian Devil, Beep Beep, and, of course, Jonny Quest.

French Comic Books

My 14 year old son is a subscriber to CBM and suggested I write to you in my search for French comic books.

We homeschool over three sons and my husband would like to add some fun reading to their lessons. We've looked all over Norfolk and can't find any French comic books for young kids (seven to nine).

We're not looking for super-hero books. More in the line of: Peanuts, Garfield, or Family Circus. Books along the same lines that are French or translated into french are just fine.

The Mosers
3448 Bell St., Norfolk, Virginia 23513

Can anybody help? Maybe some of you readers in Quebec?

Mayor LaGuardia's Comic

There are so many pieces of information to be assembled in Comic Fandom and so many wonderful areas of interest, it's amazing to me that the fun never stops.

In the 20th issue of the CBM I was taken by John Meier's article on one of the most fascinating stories ever, in any publication.

National #18 is incredible. I'd like to expound briefly on this book. The comic book is eerily dated December 1941 and on the stands as early as six weeks prior to the first of December. I don't have the crystal ball to see Will Eisner drawing those "Uncle Sam" pages, but I'd make an educated guess that they were probably drawn between August and September of 1941. What did Mr. Eisner know that most of the world didn't? I have never met him in person, but given the chance, it's the first question I'd ask him. How many other publications in History have predicted a major event that would change the scope of the world so dramatically? Is the name Will Eisner really an encrypted code word for Nostradamus? Wow. Wow. Wow.!!

Besides the obviously fantastic Lou Fine cover, this book rates a ten for me. At $275 in NM according to Overstreet, it seems an extreme case of "undervalue".

I'm lucky to own one copy (and NO, you can't have it!) The copy once belonged to the honorable mayor of New York, Fiorelo H. LaGuardia. He used it to read over the air on Sunday morning to the kiddies of the Big Apple.

Can you imagine what visions went through their tiny little brains while hearing the Mayor read Mr. Eisner's grand prediction? Say what you want, but no kid ever doubted the reality of any comic book. Superman, Captain America, Green Lantern... They all existed for them.

I wish I could make a xerox of his signature, but alas, he wrote it in pencil over the red background of the Red Ryder advertisment on the back cover. Naturally, it's resting comfortably in its FORTRESS©, protected from a future suprise attack by some dastardly enemy.

I rank it high, among such Quality notables as Hit #5, National #7, and Feature #27.

Chris Pedrin, California

continued on page 72

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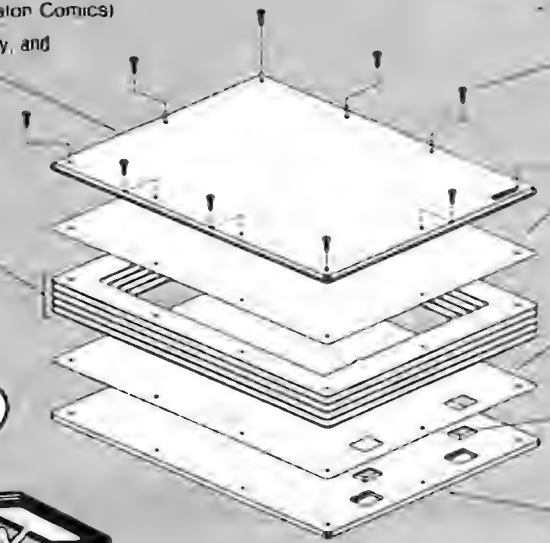

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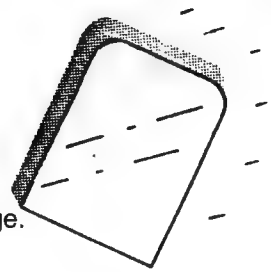

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"The Supernatural Sleuth...Mark Merlin"

In August 1959, DC installed heroes in three of their six fantasy titles. Most collectors know that Space Ranger began his memorable series in *Tales Of The Unexpected* #40 and that Adam Strange literally took over *Mystery In Space* with issue #53. Yet many are often unaware that a third Silver Age DC hero series started that very same month in *House Of Secrets* #23! This issue introduced the supernatural sleuth, Mark Merlin, during the peak of National's creative genius.

Amazingly, it appears as if DC's editors felt that Mark Merlin (unlike Space Ranger and Adam Strange) would be a sure bet at the stands. Not only did they start his series without a "Showcase" tryout, but they also assigned the drawing chores to one of DC's "senior" artists, Mort Meskin.

The capable Meskin already had over two decades of comic art under his belt. Mort not only drew the first Sheena strips in 1938, but went on to draw the Vigilante at DC, and later did pre-code romance and horror.

House Of Secrets #23 also contains the first story in which Mark is the narrator. The story opens in his office, explaining how most of his cases turn out to be the product of natural causes. But he also explains that there are some (the records of which reside in a file drawer marked with a big question mark) that "go beyond our understanding", and "will amaze us" in future issues.

HOUSE of SECRETS
GREAT SCOTT! IT'S SCRIBBLING ANOTHER MESSAGE OF DOOM!
Beware! Koj will appear at midnight!
Featuring The CURSE OF THE PROPHETIC PENCIL!
A MARK MERLIN MYSTERY!

HOUSE OF SECRETS #23 (AUG 1959) Mark Merlin, DC's Supernatural Sleuth begins. Of the three series DC began this month, only Adam Strange started as the cover star. Mark Merlin and Space Ranger had to settle for blurb boxes. Although the couple featured on this effective cover look a lot like Mark and Elsa, they are not the Supernatural Sleuth and his faithful secretary. ©DC

This first episode continues as Mark recounts two incidents. The first shows metal objects flying around in a museum, which Merlin later proves to be the work of hidden magnets. The second shows Merlin menaced by giant one-celled creatures while exploring a cave. Those he attacks, divide into two creatures, and he is lucky to escape. This second storyline is an example from the "?" file.

House Of Secrets #31 (Apr 1960) coincided with the premier of the Justice League Of America in *Brave & Bold* #28. The April 1960 Mark Merlin mystery is also a standout. "The Hybrid Monster" is an excellent story about a creature with the strength of a gorilla, the wings of an eagle, and human brain power, all multiplied many times over. Also in #31 is a solid yarn with art by the great Russ Heath. "The Human Wave" tells of a modern man pitted against an ancient sea curse. This is a compelling effort and Heath's art shines as a prelude to his underwater work on the Sea Devils.

House Of Secrets #32 (May 1960) is worthwhile from cover to cover. "Prisoner of Formula Zero" has science going awry as a chemist is engulfed by a substance that makes him look like a monster. "The Creatures From The Book" is a good puzzler, as a young Yank goes off to Europe to claim an inheritance. But the castle he's been willed has a habit of being visited by strange beings, whom he finds described in an old book. The book leads him to believe that it is his presence that has brought these bygone terrors back to life. But...

DC
10¢
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
HOUSE of SECRETS
A MARK MERLIN MYSTERY
W-WE'RE BEING LOWERED INTO A STRANGE WORLD OF WEIRD CREATURES!

ABOVE: HOUSE OF SECRETS #31 (APR 1960) is a provocative cover for a memorable story and perhaps the high watermark of the Mark Merlin run. Since Mark is actually the one in the chair, it's fortunate that the transfer machine didn't debilitate the donor... ©DC

In "The Test Tube World" Mark Merlin and his secretary, Elsa, shrink down into a subatomic universe on a rescue mission. They encounter bizarre examples of flora and fauna as they search for the person presumed lost in this unknown land. Once again, the story's success is based on the plausibility of the premise, which was not always the case at DC.

As a matter of fact, some of the other Mark Merlin stories suffered from severe unlikeness. Sometimes when these credulity gaps were coupled with the contrived "stroke of genius" solutions that DC required of its heros in the last panel, it put just a bit too much strain on our willing suspension of disbelief.

The supernatural sleuth continued into the mid 1960s, only to be eclipsed by a character named Eclipso. Regrettably, in an attempt to keep up with the costumed hero madness of the time, the character of Mark Merlin was eventually transformed into a pseudo "super hero" (Prince Ra-Man) as a companion for Eclipso. And after Eclipso and the Prince phased out (as all bad ideas must) *House Of Secrets* #92 introduced the enduring Swamp Thing.

RIGHT: HOUSE OF SECRETS #32 (MAY 1960) Adam Strange had Alanna, Space Ranger had Myra Mason, and Mark Merlin had Elsa. Note that the proper attire for visiting a subatomic world is coat and tie for the gentlemen and high heels for the ladies... ©DC

House Of Secrets was published from 1956 through 1978 for a respectable 154 issue run (of which the early Mark Merlin appearances are surely the highlight). Part of this success was due to DC's seemingly endless creative magic during the sizzling 1959-60 peak.

Looking back, we can see that the idea of a detective that specializes in paranormal phenomena is a sound one. DC starred Ghost Breaker during the early 1950's in the last nine *Star Spangled Comics*, and Roy Raymond was featured in issues of *Detective Comics* that were contemporaries of the best Mark Merlin *House Of Secrets*. However, Ghost Breaker and Roy Raymond always had adventures that boiled down to "reality". In contrast, the "supernatural sleuth's" plots were unabashedly fantasy, and the better Mark Merlin stories in *House Of Secrets* compare well to the other DC offerings from that fabulous era. ■

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61 Fair 50.00
75 (1st Young Allies issue) G-VG 85.00
87 (1st Capt. America/Golden Girl team-up story - the success of this team-up issue led to a lot of similar team-ups in Marvel's Silver Age, long overlooked key issue) VG, centerfold loose 150.00

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67 Abt VG 85.00
69 (Atomic Bomb issue, origin, 1st app of Tomahawk - neat issue) Abt VG, ts 80.00
70 (Robin vs The Clock) VG 90.00
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72 (classic Robin jungle cover) VG+ 95.00
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73 G-VG 60.00
74 (Robin vs The Clock) Abt Fine 120.00
75 (The State vs Robin, strong cover) Fine 130.00
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100 (Tomahawk is "The Frontier Phantom" in this fantasy/ time travel story - I believe this is the only story of this type in the series - Tomahawk goes through time to help police capture contemporary criminals) Abt Fine 100.00
104 VG 45.00
105 VG-Fine 50.00
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58 Fine 125.00
65 VG 70.00
65 (Australian ed, b&w) VG 15.00
67 (Perry Como) VG 90.00
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82 G-VG 35.00
84 (Australian, color) Abt VG 15.00
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The Enigma of All-Flash Comics

The All-Strange but All-True account of the GA Flash's All-Solo comic

by Mark Steel

After Superman and Batman got their own magazines, the editors of *All-Star Comics* asked the comic reading public which hero they would like the next single-character–book devoted to. "THE FLASH WINS" was the headline which summarized the results of the survey printed in *All-Star Comics* #4 (Mar-Apr 1941). The publication, *All-Flash Quarterly* #1 (Summer 1941), commenced a 32 issue run which spanned six and one half years. It should also be noted that Green Lantern finished second so his 38 issue run began with #1, Fall 1941. Wonder Woman came in third.

This poses an interesting value question for collectors and historians. *All-Flash* #1 is the older book and stars a character significantly more popular at the time. Yet, since *Price Guide* #11 (1981), *GL* #1 lists for almost twice that of *All-Flash* #1.

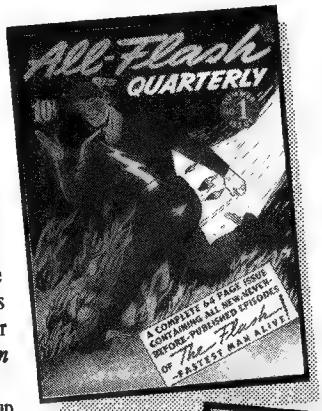
Perhaps it is the dilemma of the title. The anthology title, *Action Comics*, generated the Superman solo title. The anthology title, *Detective Comics*, generated Batman. The anthology title, *All American Comics*, generated Green Lantern. The anthology title, *Sensation Comics*, generated Wonder Woman.

But the anthology title starring The Flash and The Hawkman was already called *Flash Comics*. So from this title dilemma emerges one of the more interesting scenarios of DC's Golden Age publishing history. DC had to run a contest in order to come up with a descriptively accurate, yet different title. Hence, *All-Flash Comics*.

Imagine if you will, a fictional yet ideal scenario in which the anthology title starring Flash and Hawkman was called THUNDER COMICS or maybe LIGHTNING COMICS, or some other general title. This would have no doubt spawned a Flash title consistent with all the other DC single character magazines. But alas, for whatever editorial reason, this was not to be. *All-Flash Comics* continue to be stigmatized by a lack of collector awareness and information.

But if you look inside a copy of All-Flash you find a truly wonderful title which introduced numerous members of the Golden Age Flash family. Characters like Winky, Blinky and Noddy (dimwits reminiscent of the Three Stooges) began in issue #5. The Thinker in issue #12 and the Fiddler and Star Sapphire in issue #32. And in issue #21, the Slowest Man Alive. This character served as the prototype for the Turtle Man, Barry Allen's first foe in *Showcase* #4.

Also of interest to Flash fans is the fact that Carmine Infantino cut his teeth drawing Jay Garrick in *All-Flash*, and then later went on to draw Barry Allen and Wally West. This makes Mr. Infantino the only comic book artist to draw three generations of a Super-Hero.


All-Flash
QUARTERLY
1
A COMPLETE 64 PAGE ISSUE CONTAINING ALL NEW NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED EPISODES OF The Flash FASTEST MAN ALIVE!

©DC

There seems to be consensus among collectors that, as far as the major DC books go, *All-Flash* is undervalued, especially in light of the fact that it was the focus of fan interest four months before *Green Lantern*.

Excluding the team-up book *All-Star Comics*, the only instance of a cameo between Green Lantern and Flash in any five of their titles (*Flash Comics, All-Flash Comics, All-American Comics, Green Lantern Comics,* and *Comic Cavalcade*) is in *All-Flash* #14. No mile-high copy of #14 exists.

The most difficult issues to find are the later ones, but that seems to hold true for all of the All-American line of Super-Heroes. According to the original mile-high list, there were 25 *All-Flashes*, three were in fine or less condition and the NM+ *All-Flash* #16 was reported stolen by a previous owner. The NM #1 is severely miscut, and there is one case of duplication, *All-Flash* #24.

I appreciate the time and effort that it would take to completely research the scarcity of the *All-Flash*. From my personal experience, I've found that the number of high grade copies of any given issue (even at any of the major conventions) is remarkably low. This combined with the title enigma discussed above continues to make *All-Flash* one of the more interesting and intriguing titles in the comic book collecting universe.

Mark Steel works in Daytime Television and has been collecting comics for over 30 years. He is originally from Silver Spring, MD and now resides near Los Angeles.

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One of My Favorite Comics

A personal reminiscence: **More Fun Comics #73**

Among my favorite books of all time is *More Fun* #73 (Nov 1941)! One would have thought the well had gone creatively "dry" after the debuts of the Spectre in #52 and Dr. Fate in #55. These high profile second-tier characters shared the limelight with Sandman, Hourman, Flash, Hawkman, and Starman among others in the DC continuum.

Yet, in issue #71 of *More Fun*, came Johnny Quick, whose exploits were Flash-speed related and complimented the Spectre's "spectralness" and Fate's "fatefulness" quite well.

With a half-masked Dr. Fate on the cover belying its true import, *More Fun* #73 hit the stands cover dated (Nov 1941). Inside, we are treated to not one, but two of DC's longest running characters in their very first appearances anywhere – Green Arrow and Aquaman! (Technically, Speedy also has his first appearance here too!)

Aquaman's undersea telepathic powers were very popular, as were Green Arrow's abilities with a bow and arrow. Not enough for their own books, mind you, but consider the fact that Green Arrow eventually had more covers in *More Fun* than either Spectre or Dr. Fate combined! As back-up features crossing over to other anthology books they were a natural.

The displacement of non-super features in most all the anthology books such as *Adventure, World's Finest, Action, Detective,* etc. was the order of the day. Why read about boring frontier justice when you can watch a boxing glove arrow level some crook or have a telepathic command send killer whales after the bad guy? WOW!

The fact that DC had such a wealth of good second and third-tier superheroes available (with their various evolutions to enjoy), coupled with the interest and dollars they generated, leaves little doubt why editors moved that way.

The popularity translated into whole books dedicated to showcasing them in bunches... books like *All Star, Leading,* and *Comic Cavalcade*. Early Leading Comics also deserves note because it features Green Arrow and other less prominent heroes, like the Star Spangled Kid and Stripesy.

Yet of all the pivotal origin books in that time-frame (and there were several), *More Fun* #73 had more than any of them. Not only did you get the first appearances of Green Arrow, Speedy, and Aquaman – but also a Spectre story, a Dr. Fate cover and story, the third appearance of Johnny Quick, and a few short features thrown in as well! All in one incredible Golden Age comic!

The moon will come up square before we will ever find another comic that put so much in it for just 10 cents! ■

by Stephen Gentner

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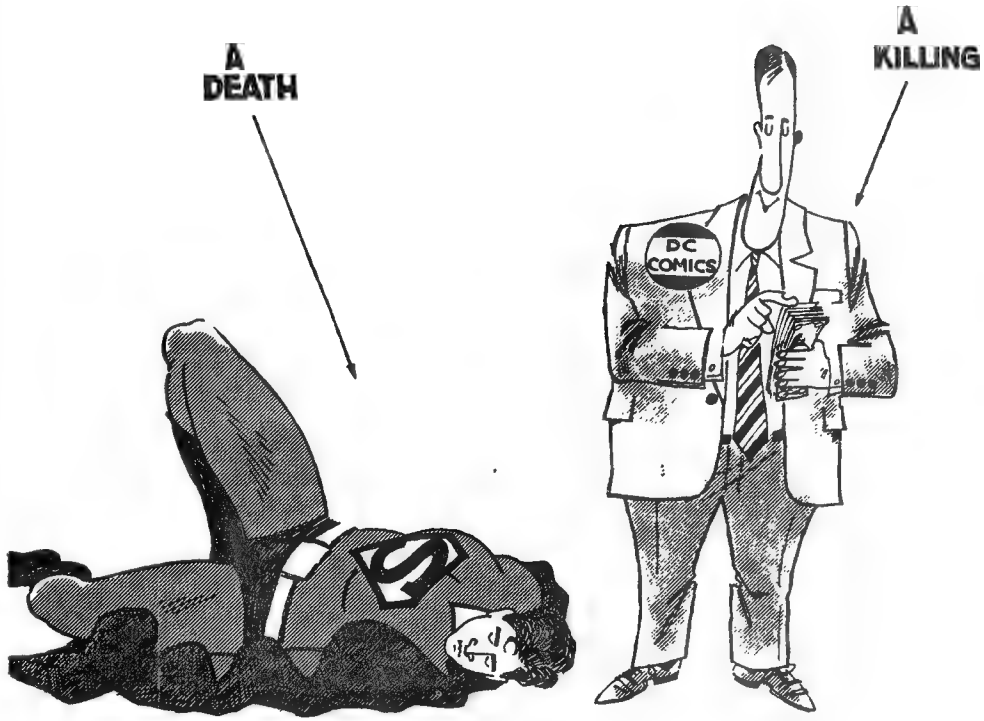

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Fin...Fang...Funn...

Kirby Monsters On The Run!

History shows again and again,

How Nature points out the folly of man—

Godzilla!

—Blue Oyster Cult, "Godzilla"

BELOW
Tales to Astonish #19 (May 1961)
©MEG

TO UNDERSTAND THESE PONDEROUS, MASSIVE, huge, powerful, crushing, and altogether fantastic creations of comic book legend, we must look back to a more magical time in comic book history! The Atlas monsters thundered onto the scene from 1959-62 and we'd never seen their like before. Monsters with names like Bruttu, Groot, and Spragg menaced the world in uncountable ways. They also formed a bridge between Atlas's sci-fi/horror themes of the 50's, and the reign of the Marvel hero universe in the 60s. And in doing so, they've created a unique and increasingly popular niche in the world of comic book collecting.

I was nine when I saw my first one... "Sserpo... The Creature Who Crushed the World" in *Amazing Adventures #6* (Nov 1961). Sserpo was breathtaking. Drawn from an "underneath" perspective, the cover was dominated by a huge, rock-skinned beast whose feet were causing earthquakes, and whose head towered above the cloud layer. Sserpo's massive body size literally threatened to crush the Earth. How could a skinny pre-teen kid pass up a creature like that?

Summarized in the 1992 Price Guide article "Journey into the Unknown World of Atlas Fantasy" (#22, pp. A87-A103) and parodied in *CBG #975* (7/24/92, p.20) among others, Marvel's wonderful monster years have recently received a lot of attention. Basically an undervalued "sleeper" era, these books have rapidly become the focus of collector interest and demand because of their historical relevance to Marvel. In these fun to read issues, you can see prototypes of many of the characters who will later be part of Marvel's third heroic age. But really discovering the wonders of the Marvel monster years requires a little insight into the history of Atlas Comics.

History...

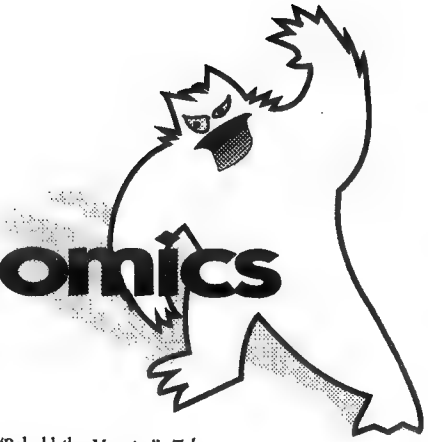
Times were more than tough for the twenty year old comic book publishing company in 1958. The post-war/Wertham years hadn't been kind to the industry. To its further detriment, the previous year severe distribution problems had almost destroyed the company. Because of those problems, Atlas had dropped from being one of the largest comics producers in the world, to being left with virtually only one employee, Stan Lee himself.

The return of Jack Kirby to an almost empty Atlas office is well documented. Close to the same time, Steve Ditko and Don Heck also came back to the company. In 1958, Stan Lee was 36 years old, Jack Kirby was 41, and Steve Ditko was 31. They, along with Don Heck, were the magic blend that would change comic book history.

Now that the team was in place, enter the monsters! Lee and Kirby are the keys to this picture. During a conversation at the 1991 Sotheby's Auction preview, Stan Lee modestly commented about his method for picking comic themes. He would observe what was currently popular in the culture... what movies people watched, and what TV shows and music were on top. Lee's approach was basically, "See what's going on and stay in touch with what's popular." And at DC, where Jack Kirby had been working, his editor, Jack Schiff, had the same mindset. He fol-

A Guide to the Atlas Monster Comics

by John Townsend, Ph.D.



lowed American contemporary culture, and kept his finger squarely on the pulse of the public.

The Impact Of Media...

What were American kids and young adults interested in? During the 50's, science fiction was breaking through. Asimov and Heinlein were getting more general attention and notice. "Bug-eyed Monsters" too numerous to list invaded the local cinema. Popular radio played hits like "One eyed, one horned, flying purple people eater" and "The Blob" (from the Steve McQueen movie of the same name). TV shows, like United Artist's pioneering program "Science Fiction Theatre", was followed toward the end of the decade by the classic "The Twilight Zone" (first telecast on October 2, 1959). Lee, Schiff, and Kirby all noticed and served heaping helpings of sci-fi in their mags.

But part of the invasion did not come from outer space. It came instead from across the pacific ocean in the form of Godzilla, circa 1954-55. The gigantic T. Rex-like lizard with the funny name stormed through the American movie theater scene like a house on fire. Immensely popular, Godzilla galvanized the Japanese motion picture industry and single-handedly started an avalanche of Nipponese monsters. What kid of the era will ever forget the likes of Mothra, Rodan, and the Mysterians. They were fakey... they were dubbed... they were just guys in rubber suits stomping on little models of Tokyo... but we loved every minute!

Tributes to these wonderful films are abundant in the monster comics and are embedded in numerous stories. Boss Baxter owns an outdoor advertising display shop which can manufacture gigantic artificial monsters for sci-fi movies, and he saves the world ("Goliath", *Journey Into Mystery #63*). Victor Cartwright, monster movie maker, is unappreciated by the public because his films aren't "art"—and he saves the world ("Dragoom", *Strange Tales #76*). Bob, movie scenery set designer, saves the world (the second "Colossus", *Tales Of Suspense* #20). Charles Hudson, movie producer, saves the world ("Monstrollo", *Tales Of Suspense #25*). Joe, a monster movie publicist, saves the world ("Behold the Monster", *Tales Of Suspense #37)*. Darius Wolfe, sci-fi movie director, meets the Martians ("The Day the Martians Struck", *Tales To Astonish #4*).

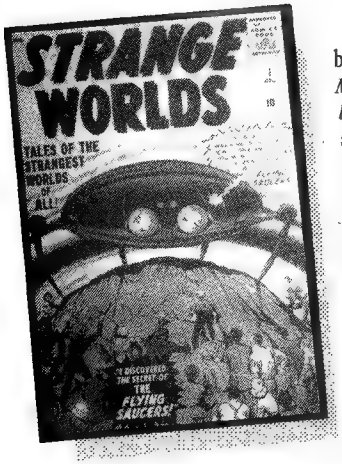
All these creative media elements were eventually distilled into a simple formula. Monster enters, menaces, gives origin and is defeated. To complete the comic, unleash Kirby's powerful imagination onto the cover and let him pencil the story. Lee would script the story (the beginning of the "Marvel method" of producing comics). Then add several sci-fi or fantasy stories using Ditko, Heck, Reinman, Sinnott or others. Imagination was the order of the day and there were no limits.

BELOW
Tales Of Suspense #12 (Nov 1960)
©MEG

TALES OF
SUSPENSE
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
12
10¢
IT IS GOR-KILL! HE IS RISING OUT OF THE WATER, JUST AS WE FEARED!
BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES, YOU WILL SEE...
GOR-KILL, THE LIVING DEMON" COME TO LIFE!

Kirby's DC Connection...

But no investigation into the fascinating world of Kirby's "pre Marvel" monsters, would be complete without also considering Kirby's fantasy work at DC! Jack Kirby worked at National from the fall of 1956 to the fall of 1958. During this time, he produced the famed *Challengers of the Unknown* (in Showcase as well as in their own title). Kirby also drew monster stories for DC fantasy



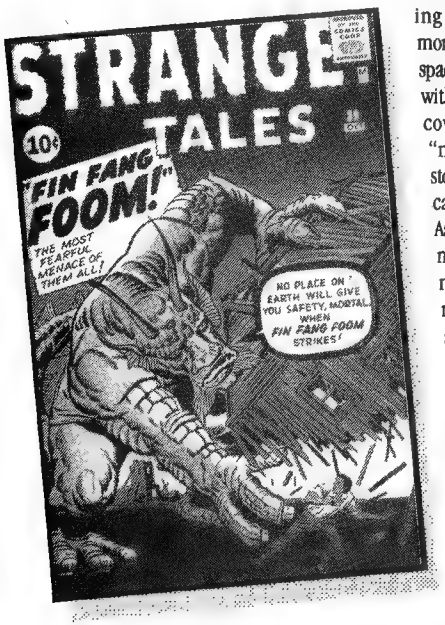
books like *House of Mystery, House of Secrets, My Greatest Adventure*, and *Tales of the Unexpected.* It is a little known fact that Kirby stories were still being published at DC AFTER he began work for Marvel. *Strange Worlds* #1 and *World of Fantasy* #15, Kirby's Atlas monster debut issues, came out in December, 1958. Yet his beasts are featured as late as April, 1959 in *House of Mystery* #85. DC most likely had Kirby inventory stockpiled thus allowing it to be published months after he left DC.

House of Mystery #85, featuring "The Stone Sentinels of Giant Island" with cover and art by Kirby, is interesting for another reason... it seems to be part a recurring Kirby theme. Versions of an Easter Island "monster" motif can also be seen in *Tales To Astonish* #5 (Sep 1959) and in the very collectible *Tales To Astonish* #16 (Feb 1961) in which the character is named "Thorr"!

ABOVE
Strange Worlds #1 (Dec 1958) ©MEG
BELOW
Strange Tales #89 (Oct 1961) ©MEG

Although his DC monsters were cleaner and drawn with a bit more detail, Kirby's Atlas brutes seem to have more of a visceral and primal energy than the DC predecessors. Some have proposed that this contrast is symbolic of the over all differences between DC and Marvel Silver Age characters and stories.

But all these previous viewpoints and historical perspectives regarding the charming Marvel monsters have been made without the benefit of a categorized and quantified data. What follows are some fun and interesting statistics about the Marvel monster books. Because of limited space, only cover stories are listed with a few observations on non-cover stories (referred to as "nc"). The hundreds of other stories in these issues are a likely candidate for further research. As you peruse the various accumulations of trivia, you may notice one amazing and overriding idea. It is that the creative output of Marvel was nothing short of phenomenal, especially considering the very small size of the team.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"FIN FANG FOOM!"
THE MOST FEARFUL MENACE OF THEM ALL!
NO PLACE ON EARTH WILL GIVE YOU SAFETY, MORTAL, WHEN FIN FANG FOOM STRIKES!

The Marvel Monster Titles...

The "Big Eight" of monster titles, their abbreviations, plus dates and number of issues, are listed below.

Amazing Adventures (*AA*) #1(Jun 1961) through #6 (Nov 1961) - 6 issues.

Amazing Adult Fantasy (*AAF*) #7 (Dec 1961) through #14 (Jul 1962) - 8 issues.

Journey Into Mystery (*JIM*) #50 (Jan 1959) through #82 (Jul 1962) - 33 issues.

Strange Tales (*ST*) #67 (Feb 1959) through #100 (Sep 1962) - 34 issues.

Strange Worlds (SW) #1(Dec 1958) through #5 (Aug 1959) - 5 issues.

Tales Of Suspense (*TOS*) #1 (Jan 1959) through #38 (Feb 1963) - 38 issues.

Tales To Astonish (*TTA*) #1 (Jan 1959) through #34 (Aug 1962) - 34 issues.

World Of Fantasy (*WOF*) #15 (Dec 1958) through #19 (8/59) - 5 issues.

Even after the Marvel heroes took over, Sci-fi and fantasy stories continued for awhile in Marvel's "Big Four" (*JIM, ST, TOS,* and *TTA*) beyond these dates. But these excellent backup stories were eventually phased out in favor of longer hero stories.

The Definition Of A Marvel Monster...

Actually, the monster stories themselves are technically either sci-fi, adventure or fantasy stories. But for our purposes, if the story is a vehicle to present a huge scary being, we'll call it a monster story. Which leads us to the real question: What is a monster?

A problem exists in categorizing the monsters. Not all beings in these stories are monsters per se. Some are aliens. Some are human villains. Some are robots who are bolted to the floor and can't move. To solve this definitional dilemma, three (admittedly personal) criteria for monsterdom are used.

Non human - A monster can't be a human being. Alien, animal, or machine, yes. People, no. This rules out scary-looking human villains. Dr. Doom is a bad guy, but he's not a monster. Therefore, neither Magneto (*ST* #84) nor Metallo (*TOS* #16) would qualify.

Frightening appearance - A monster has to look scary. He can't just look different. This rules out weird-looking-but-not-really-scary aliens. For example, a genie (*JIM* #76) and the Krills (*AAF* #8) don't quite make it. Just not terrifying enough to be monsters.

Physical threat - A monster needs to be a physical menace. Kirby had them destroying buildings, cars, and landscapes all over the place. There was a forcefulness to them. This rules out stationary robots (*JIM* #51) and mean scary-looking aliens who were also just not going to beat you up. They were more mental or technical. Bombu (*JIM* #60) and Orrgo (*ST* #90) are examples. Four or five feet tall, they just don't pose a physical threat.

But not all monsters are aliens. To understand this, look at

the ten "Monster vs. Aliens" stories. "Colossus" 1 and 2 (*TOS* #14 and #20), "Mechano" (*ST* #86), "Monstrollo" (*TOS* #25), "Mr. Morgan's Monster" (*ST* #99), "Sphinx" (*ST* #70), "Thing" (*ST* #79), "Vandoom" (*TTA* #17), "X" (*AA* #4), and "Behold—the Monster" (*TOS* #37). Each of these complex and fanciful stories has a monster interacting with aliens. Usually, the monster is saving the world from the aliens. and the aliens definitely are not monsters. This distinction helps us keep the two categories separate.

What to do for those characters who aren't technically monsters—but almost are? This "Borderline" grouping includes beings who have monsterish characteristics. A Borderline being may be one of the precursors to the monster era, such as *JIM* #51's machine in "Robot on the Rampage." Huge, destructive, but can't move. Yet you can see the coming true monster robots like Orogo (*JIM* #57) and ROE (*JIM* #81), who could move his arms and maybe more, within the "Rampaging One". Another Borderline entity might be included in the winding-down phase of the monster era, as more fantasy emerged, as with the genie in "Teen who Ruled the World" (*TOS* #38). Bombu and Magneto are also Borderlines.

The total number of True Monster stories : 112 (65%); Total number of Borderline Monster stories : 14 (8%); Total number of Sci-Fi stories, non-monster : 32 (19%); and total number of Fantasy stories, non-monster (F) : 12 (7%).

Who, When, and How Many...

In no particular order, I have compiled a host of statistics:

Total issues : 163

Range of dates : four years, two months. *SW* #1/*WOF* #15 (Dec 1958) through *TOS* #38 (Feb 1963).

Cover pictures : 170. Four issues had double picture covers: *JIM* #74, *JIM* #75, *TTA* #26, and *TTA* #30. There is one quadruple picture cover issue: *TOS* #28. These multiples all appeared in a five months period (Nov 1961 through Apr 1962), possibly as marketing experiment.

Issues with monsters on cover : 122.

Number of monsters on covers : 126.

Non repeating monsters on covers : 119. Of the 126 cover monsters, seven appeared twice: Colossus (*TOS* #14 and #20); Gargantus (*ST* #80 and #85); Gorgilla (*TTA* #12 and #18); Gorilla-Man (*TTA* #28 and #30); Grogg (*ST* #83 and #87); Taboo (*ST* #75 and #77) and Xemnu (*JIM* #62 and #66).

Total number of different cover monsters : 119!

Precursor monsters: Flying Saucer (SW #1, Dec 1958); Alien lizard (*TOS* #1, Jan 1959); Giant Turtle (*TTA* #1, Jan 1959) - just not scary enough to be the real thing; and Robot on the Rampage (*JIM* #51, Mar 1959).

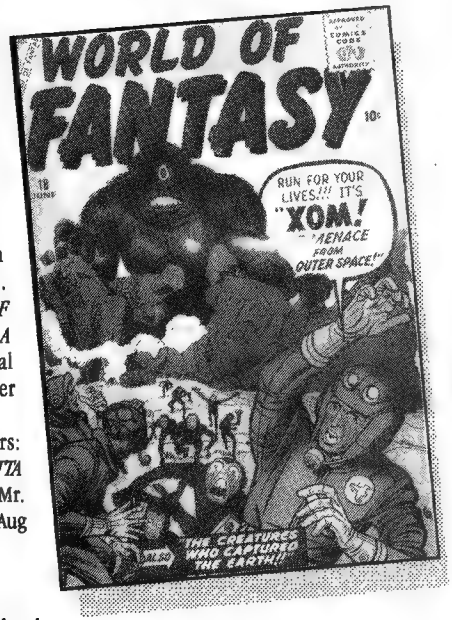
First true cover monster: Creature from Planet X (*SW* #3; Apr 1959).

Funny names begin: Xom (*WOF* #18; Jun 1959; Monstro the Ape (*JIM* #54, Sep 1959); Grottu (*ST* #73; Feb 1960); Monstro the Octopus (*TOS* #8; Mar 1960); Mummex (*TTA* #8; Mar 1960).

Heaviest monster period: Nov 1959 through Nov 1961, 84 consecutive issues in all titles are monster covers. Note that *Fantastic Four* #1 is cover dated Nov 1961.

First moves away from monsters: *FF* #1 (Nov 1961). Began superhero era. Also *AAF* #7 (Dec 1961). Replaced *AA* with clever Ditko reversal themes. First non-monster cover in 25 months.

Last true cover monsters: "Monster at my Window" (*TTA* #34, Aug 1962) and Mr. Morgan's Monster (*ST* #99, Aug 1962).



Artwork...

In a nutshell, Monsters equal Kirby.

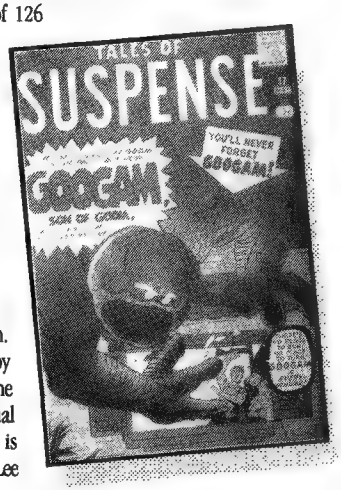
No one could represent the sheer power, size, and strength of the monsters like the King. Lee used his most prolific artist over and over and over again in this era.

Also contributing, but more on non cover stories were Carl Burgos, John Buscema, Reed Crandall, Steve Ditko, Jack Davis, Bill Everett, Don Heck, Russ Heath, Paul Reinman, Joe Sinnott, and Al Williamson.

Kirby's Monster Statistics 138 of 163 issue covers (85%); 120 of 170 cover story artworks (71%); 118 of 170 cover and art both (69%); 112 of 122 monster cover issues (92%); 104 of 126 monster cover story artwork (83%); 102 of 126 monster cover and art both (81%). The 92% figure for Kirby's monster cover art is telling: Lee knew Kirby monster covers would sell.

Inking was mostly done by Ayers, Lieber, and Rule. It's interesting, however, to take a look at Ditko inking Kirby's pencils in *JIM* #62 (cvr); *JIM* #63 (art); *ST* #88 (cvr/art); and *TOS* #10 (cvr).

ABOVE
World Of Fantasy #18 (Jun 1959)
©MEG
BELOW
Tales Of Suspense #17 (May 1961)
©MEG



Those Funny Monster Names...

Lee knew he had to get the reader's attention. He used a combination of a staggering Kirby cover with a bizarre name—the weirder the better with many double consonants for visual impact. What's also funny about the names is the repetition around certain sounds, as if Lee

The King of Monsters Speaks!

A Recent Conversation with Monster Maker Jack Kirby

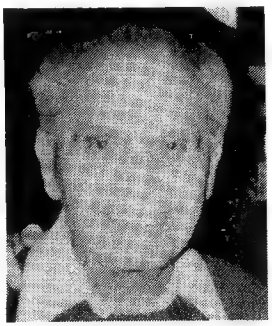
BY GLENN KOLEEDA

Glenn Koleeda: *What were the earliest monsters?*

Jack Kirby: There were monsters in the pulp magazines that preceded the comics. Before super heroes it was straight science fiction. They used innovative illustrations (like theatrical monsters) in order to sell magazines. Don't forget that the idea was not only do first rate art work and to utilize first rate imaginative ideas, but to sell the magazines! The pulps let us sell our illustrations and the pulp magazine itself. Also, they required only one illustration per story, and, of course, a painted cover.

Glenn: *Why do you think so many collectors and fans think that Fin Fang Foom stands out above the rest?*

Jack: Fin Fang Foom was a monster with human qualities. When a monster is given these qualities it Acquires equal status with any human character, and therefore becomes interesting in that manner. The interesting part of this is that the reader knows the monster is not human (and can't be classified as such), yet it is portrayed in a human like manner. Fin Fan Foom was like this, sort of "semi-human". He had clothes and was angered by insults. In acknowledging Fin Fang Foom, we acknowledge something that is very fearsome in us. It's similar to Dracula, who is human too, or semi-human in his own way. We acknowledge him in a human fashion, yet we are frightened of him. It's our vulnerabilities that sell magazines. Because the writer asks himself what we are afraid of, and puts an image in place of that question, and it becomes a monster. If it's a good one like Dracula, it becomes a classic. It's always been done that way. Dracula is an excellent case in point. The peasants would sit around the fire and tell the stories. The writers would record the stories, and that's how the classics



were born. We still read these stories today.

Glenn: *What were the inspirations for some of the monsters you came up with in the fifties and sixties?*

Jack: The initial inspiration was always story telling and the way the monster frightens us. Readers are always intrigued by the monster's behavior. Like King Kong which is an eternal classic. We tried to do the same thing with our monsters. . There wasn't a person of that period who didn't see Godzilla, re-runs of Frankenstein, or all the other great horror classics.

Glenn: *Was this particular period a time when monsters were popular?*

Jack: Monsters were always popular! Your best bet in story telling is to create a new monster, and, if its good, nobody will ever forget it. You'll have readers eternally.

Glenn: *Do you have any favorite monsters?*

Jack: I like them all. I like a monster who is well drawn, well written, and well acted. I like a monster whose creator wants to reach out to me, in some fashion. If I'm fascinated with his creation, my reaction will fulfill his ambition.

Glenn: *Tell me about inker Dick Ayers?*

Jack: He had a very good strong line. I rarely did it myself because it took me from my writing and drawing. Others had thin, crisp lines, and Dick had good, strong lines. The inker could sell your work as well as you could, thereby making it as impressive to the reader as possible.

Glenn: *What about your early Silver Age work at DC?*

Jack: It was mainly science fiction concepts. I did a lot of young heroes, like *The Challengers Of The Unknown*. They were a fighting team. The basis of the art is always the same, it's story telling art. That's what comics are… they allow you to tell an entire story in twenty some pages. Comics allow you to do a "silent movie" of sorts. I always try to bring the story to an exciting climax. If I insert a monster into that climax, I do it in a variety of ways. Is that monster victorious? Is he defeated? Does he wander off and become a fable? King Kong, for instance, is an undying myth. One sees King Kong ripping up the jungle, aiming his fist at the world. This great ape monster will never die.

Glenn: *I know you're planning some new Kirby monsters for the 1990s. Which monsters do you think will be popular?*

Jack: I think any one of my monsters that was part of a well written and well told story would work today. Those old monsters sold a lot of comic magazines. Back then, the comic business was a shaky affair at best. Those were the very beginnings of Marvel. There were two dominant publishers, and I bounced between both of them.

My new monsters will be drawn in various and different ways in order to maintain interest in the stories. Of course the public might grow to like one monster more than another, then I will concentrate on him. There's a million stories left to be told. Monsters have a mystery all there own. You have to interpret that mystery, and that's the bottom line.

Glenn: Thanks for taking a moment to talk shop with us Jack.

Jack: My pleasure. And give my best to CBM readers. Tell 'em Kirby is back! ■

was milking the sound for all it was worth. Here are some examples:

Doom, Dragoom, Droom, Fin Fang Foom, Goom, Googam, and Vandoom. Gorgilla, Gorgolla, Gorilla, Gorilla-Man, Gor-Kill, Gomdulla, and Korilla. Grogg, Groot, Grottu, and Gruto. Monster, Monsteroso, Monstro, Monstrollo, and Monstrom. Orogo, Orrgo, Rorgg, and Rro. Titan and Titano

Repeated names: Colossus (*ST* #72, *TOS* #14, and *TOS* #20); Hulk (*JIM* #62 and #66, *ST* #75, *TTA* #21); Monsteroso (*AA* #5 and *TTA* #18); Monstro (*JIM* #54 and *TOS* #8); Thing (*JIM* #74, *ST* #79 and #92, *TOS* #26, and *TTA* #30); X (*AA* #4 and *TTA* #20).

Repeated titles: "Three Who Vanished". It's the cover title for both *JIM* #50 (Jan 1959) an alien story, and SW #5 (Aug 1959), a time travel yarn. Published 8 months apart, the plot of the latter story is repeated in "Those Who Change" in *AAF* #10 (Mar 1962).

Monsters In Fantastic Four 1-10...

Technically, the first true pre-hero Marvel title (as defined by the Lee/Kirby/Ditko team) was *Strange Worlds* (#1; Dec 1958 through #5; Aug 1959). The first Marvel superhero, the "oriental-ish" Dr. Droom, appeared in *AA* #1-4 and #6. In fact, the last appearance of Droom coincides with the first appearance of the *FF* (Nov 1961). But in the first ten issues of *FF*, one can see the shift from monster to superhero format. Apparently hoping to keep the monster readership interested, they continually inject elements of Atlas into the new fare:

Fantastic Four #1: What is the focus of this classic cover? It's not the *FF* characters, but the Moleman's gigantic monster. And the Moleman resides-where else?-underneath Monster Isle. *Fantastic Four* #2: The Skrulls, who assume monsterish disguises, are themselves defeated by seeing pictures of the monsters from *Strange Tales* and *Journey into Mystery* (p.18). *Fantastic Four* #3: The Miracle Man's pet, the Monster from Mars, could have easily been another monster.

Fantastic Four #4: Namor summons "the largest living thing in all the world...the deadly Giganto!" (p.15) The huge sea beast destroys lots of New York in the standard monster m.o. *Fantastic Four* #5: Ben Grimm is offended when Johnny Storm compares him to the Hulk, a "comic book monster" (p.2).

Fantastic Four #7: An alien robot comes to take the *FF* to Kurrgo. Remember the cover of *TTA* #25?: "I have come to take you to Krogarr!" Also, Reed's solution for the doomed population of Planet X is to reduce their size, allowing them to all fit into one space ship and shuttle to a new planet. It's the same plot of "Only Twelve May Live" (*JIM* #53). *Fantastic Four* #8: The pinheaded giant puppet of the Puppet Master reminds us of the Kirby monster robots. *Fantastic Four* #9: Reed Richards battles the Cyclops of legend on Hidden Isle. The one-eyed behemoth appeared in *TOS* #10.

Fantastic Four #10: In the Lee/Kirby cameo issue, we see pictures of comics with titles reminiscent of *TTA* (p.5, panel 3) and *TOS* (panel 7). Also, the infinite shrinking defeat of Dr. Doom can be found in the "Blue Glass Bottle" fantasy of *TOS* #34. By *Fantastic Four* #10 (Jan 1963), most of the primary Marvel superheroes and villains have been introduced. And, as the new universe begins to develop and unfold, direct Atlas monster references diminish until the 70's.

ABOVE
World Of Fantasy #19 (Aug 1959) ©MEG
BELOW
Strange Tales #79 (Dec 1960) ©MEG

Marvel Monsters and Later Marvel Origins.

Consider some specific major Marvel heroes and villains. There are more than a few elements of monster powers and origins. And again, bear in mind that these aren't prototypes, but traces.

Ant-Man (*TTA* #27; Jan 1962). The luckless Dr. Henry Pym appeared around the same time as the Man in the Beehive (*TOS* #32; Aug 1962) in competitive superhero tryouts. Also see Insect Man (*TOS* #24; Dec 1961).

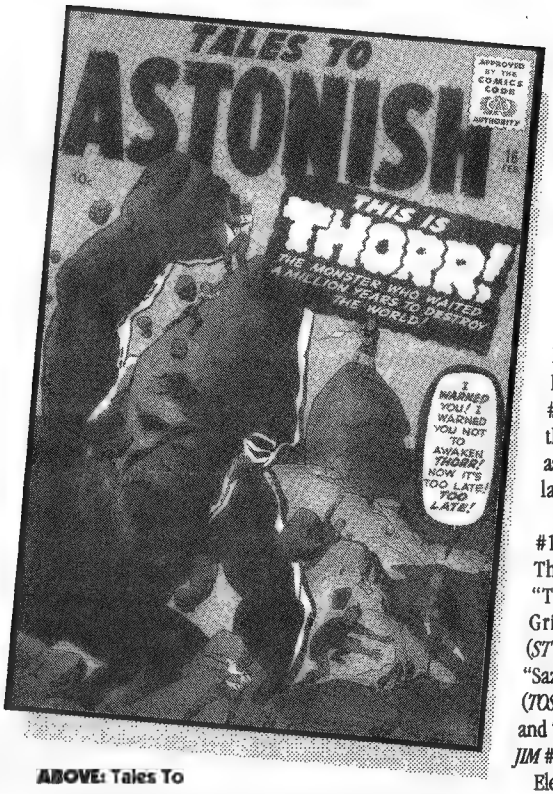
Aunt May and Uncle Ben (*AF* #15; Aug 1962). Spidey's closest relatives appeared first in *ST* #97, Jun 1962).

Beast (*X-Men* #1; Sept 1963). The early Hank McCoy has an ape-like predecessor in Gorilla-Man (*TTA* #28; Feb 1962 and #30; Apr 1962).

Cyclops (*X-Men* #1; Sep 1963). Scott Summers' powers are evoked in the story of Lo-Karr (*JIM* #75; Dec 1961).

Daredevil (*DD* #1; Apr 1964) The Athlete monster (*ST* #98; Jul 1962). Also, Orogo

STRANGE TALES
"THE THING" IS HERE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
10c
79
THE THING HAS US TRAPPED! THERE'S NO PLACE TO RUN!


TALES TO ASTONISH
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THIS IS THORR!
THE MONSTER WHO WAITED A MILLION YEARS TO DESTROY THE WORLD!
I WARNED YOU! I WARNED YOU NOT TO AWAKEN THORR! NOW IT'S TOO LATE! TOO LATE!

ABOVE: Tales To Astonish #16 (Feb 1961) One of Kirby's recurrent "Easter Island" themes. ©MEG

BELOW: Kid Colt Outlaw #100 (Sep 1960). A scarce "Kirby Monster" book. ©MEG

(*JIM* #57; Mar 1960) is defeated by a blind man.

Dr. Doom (*FF* #5; Jul 1962). With an almost identical face mask, the Monster in the Iron Mask (*TOS* #31) came out the same month as Marvel's #1 villain.

Dr. Strange (*ST* #110;Jul 1963). The characters in "The Ghost of Grismore Castle" (*ST* #79, Dec 1960); "Sazzik the Sorcerer" (*TOS* #32; Aug 1962); and "The Sorcerer" of *JIM* #78 (Mar 1962).

Electro (*AS* #9, Feb 1964). The classic Spider-Man villain has a namesake in Elektro (*TOS* #13, Jan 1961), but without similar powers. Those powers are seen, however, in the Blip (*TTA* #15, Jan 1961).

Galactus (*FF* #48, Mar 1966). The six omnipotents monsters (Dragoom, Elektro, the Genies, Gruto and Orrgo) are harbingerish for the World-Eater.

Gargantus (*TOS* #40, Apr 1962). Iron Man's enemy has a namesake in Gargantus (*ST* #80, Jan 1961).

Giant-Man (*TTA* #35, Nov 1963). A chemist takes a growth-producing serum in "A Giant Walks the Earth" (*ST* #70, Aug 1959).

Human Torch (*FF* #1, 11/61). See Dragoom (*ST* #76, Aug 1960). Johnny Storm even-looks much like Dragoom in *FF* #2 before transforming to his present look in #3.

Hulk (*IH* #1, May 1962). Similarities abound. The monsterishness of the Hulk and Thing are a perfect transition between comic eras. See the Brute that Walks (*JIM* #65; Feb 1961); Bruttu (*TOS* #22; Oct 1961); the Hulk (A Robot in *ST* #75, Jun 1960); the Hulk (a Brute in *TTA* #21, Jul 1961); the Midnight Monster (*JIM* #79, Apr 1962) and Xemnu ("The Hulk") in *JIM* #62; Nov 1960 and #66; Mar 1961).

Watch the transformation panels in Bruttu's story (p.4 and 13), as well as in the Midnight Monster (p.3). Compare these to the Hulk's first change in *Incredible Hulk* #1, p.5.

Invisible Woman (*FF* #1, Nov 1961). Gruto (*JIM* #67, Apr 1961) and the Thing in the Black Box (*JIM* #74, Nov 1961) can dematerialize. Close, but not prototypical.

Several monsters also have force fields: Elektro (*TOS* #13, Nov 1961); Googam (*TOS* #17, May 1961); Goom (*TOS* #15, Mar 1961); and Haag (*TOS* #37, Jan 1963).

Iron Man (*TOS* #39, Mar 1963). Clearly Metallo (*TOS* #16, Apr 1961).

Krang (*FF Annual* #1;1963). The Atlantean warlord has a namesake in the giant ant (*TTA* #14, Dec 1960).

Lava Men (*JIM* #97, Oct 1963) can look to the Molten Man-Thing (*TOS* #7, Jan 1960).

Loki (*JIM* #85, Oct 1962). The sorcerers in *JIM* #78 (Mar 1962) are similar. Also, see the facial structure of the Martian on the cover of *ST* #78 (Nov 1960).

Magneto (*X-Men* #1; Sep 1963). His predecessor emerges as Magneto in *ST* #84 (May 1961).

Marvel Girl (*X-Men* #1, Sep 1963). Her telekinetic powers can be seen in Bombu (*JIM* #60, Sep 1960), Gomdulla (*JIM* #61, Oct 1960), Orrgo (*ST* #90, Nov 1961), Spragg (*JIM* #68, May 1961), Thing in the Black Box (*JIM* #74, Nov 1961) and Xemnu (*JIM* #62, Mar 1961).

Molecule Man (*FF* #20, Nov 1963). See Galactus.

Mole Man (*FF* #1, Nov 1961). His monster minions were a continuation of the grand theme.

Professor X (*X-Men* #1, Sep 1963). A clear prototype exists in the Man in the Sky story of *AAF* #14, Jul 1962. Many monsters are also telepathic: Diablo (*TOS* #9, May 1960), Flying Saucer (*SW* #1, 12/58), Oog (*TOS* #27; Mar 1962), the monster in "The Sacrifice" (*ST* #91, Dec 1961), the Scorpion (*JIM* #82, Jul 1962), Taboo (*ST* #75, Jun 1960), Titan (*TOS* #28, Apr 1962) and Torr (*AA* #1, Jun 1961).

Sandman (*AS* #4; Sep 1963). The Sandman (*JIM* #70, Jul 1961).

Skrulls (*FF* #2, Jan 1962). See any shape changing monsters prior to Jan 1962. Also look at the captured Martians of the "Robot X" story (*AA* #4; Sep 1961, p.2).

Spider-Man (*AF* #15, Aug 1962). Rorrg (*JIM* #64, Jan 1961) and the Spider (*JIM* #73, Oct 1961). The Spider also has a radiation origin and super sharp senses.

Thing (*FF* #1, Nov 1961). See Hulk.

Thor (*JIM* #83, Aug 1962). The fantasy directions of *JIM* (#74,76-78 and 80) connect to the mythological fantasy theme of Thor's background. Thorr (*TTA* #16, Feb 1961) is a stone giant, not a god. Bombu (*JIM* #60, Sep 1960) has control of the weather.

Watcher (*FF* #13, Apr 1963). The Watchers of *AA* #5 (Oct 1961) are similar in perspective and function.

Monster Survivors in the Marvel Universe

Marvel hasn't kept Atlas away from its superheroes. Since the 70s, several have been resurrected—usually due to history buffs Roy Thomas and John Byrne, who always love to tie the new stuff into the old stuff:

Fin Fang Foom: mentioned earlier, the consummate Atlas monster has appeared in *Iron Man*, Walt Simonson's *Thor*, the two-part prestige format horror story Legion of the Night, and has guested in *Astonishing Tales* #23-4 (see below). To promote the Harvest of Evil sequence, Marvel put out a Fin Fang Foom facemask.

Colossus: The possessable giant statue receives his own strip in *Astonishing Tales* #21-24 (Dec 1973-Jun 1974) as It, the Living Colossus. He fights gargoyles from Stonus Five (home of Gorgolla-*ST*#74), and has a great battle with the then-karate-proficient Fin Fang Foom in #23-4. These two issues are unusual in that you don't see Atlas monsters interact often.

Xemnu: Second only to Fin Fang Foom in popularity, the hypnotic Living Titan/Hulk has enjoyed staying power in the superhero age. He's fought the Defenders in *Marvel Feature* #3 (Jun 1972) and *Defenders* #12 (Feb 1974), the Hulk in *Incredible Hulk* #145 (Nov 1971) and *Annual* #5 (1976, in which also Blip, Diablo, Goom, Groot and Taboo are featured). In more recent times, Xemnu has made romantic advances toward the She-Hulk in *She-Hulk* Vol. 2, #6-7 (Oct-Nov 1989) and has fought her in #42-43 (Aug-Sep 1992). Love hurts.

Spragg: Byrne brings the living hill back, also in *She-Hulk*, from #31-42 (Sept 1991-Aug 1992). Having both Spragg and Xemnu featured in #42 was a good stroke from this writer.

"Gormuu": To celebrate the Fantastic Four's 23rd anniversary, Byrne presents an adventure of the FF before they acquired their powers (*Fantastic Four* #271; Oct 1984). They battle Gormuu, a classic Atlas-style giant brute. The letters page then offers a tribute to the monster age.

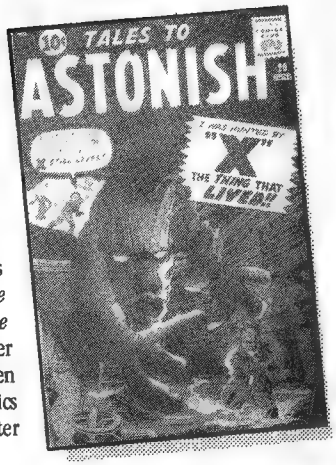
Collecting Info and Sleepers...

Average *Overstreet's Price Guide* NM price of these books, not including *TTA* #27, was the following: 1989: $37/1990: $51/1991: $65/1992: $87. They're going up an average of 33% per year. Monster books aren't easy to get and most knowledgeable collectors are not fussy about grade.

The sleepers are probably *WOF*, *JIM* and *ST*, in general. Unlike *AA*, *AAF*, *SW*, *TOS* and *TTA*, they don't start the monster era with #1 issues. However, SW is also a good buy. Larry Curcio's article, "Not in the Guide" in *CBM* #12 (Apr 1992, p.38) is a helpful reference here.

Specific sleepers? Overstreet has done a thorough researching of true prototypes. Possibly *TOS* #31 ("Monster in the Iron Mask") for its similarity to Dr. Doom in the same month; *JIM* #79 and *TOS* #22 for their Hulk-like transformation panels; and *JIM* #73 for its radioactive spider might get a nod here. Maybe *JIM* #70 for the Sandman as prototype of the now-Avenger. Finally, the Kirby pencil/Ditko inking combinations could be dark horses: *JIM* #62,63, *ST* #88 and *TOS* #10.

Monster Mag Reprints: Marvel titles *Fantasy Masterpieces, Fear, Monsters on the Prowl, Where Creatures Roam* and *Where Monsters Dwell* have randomized monster reprints. Sadly, however, the covers have been redone. Also, Marvel has published 18 classics in a trade paperback called Monster Masterworks (1989).

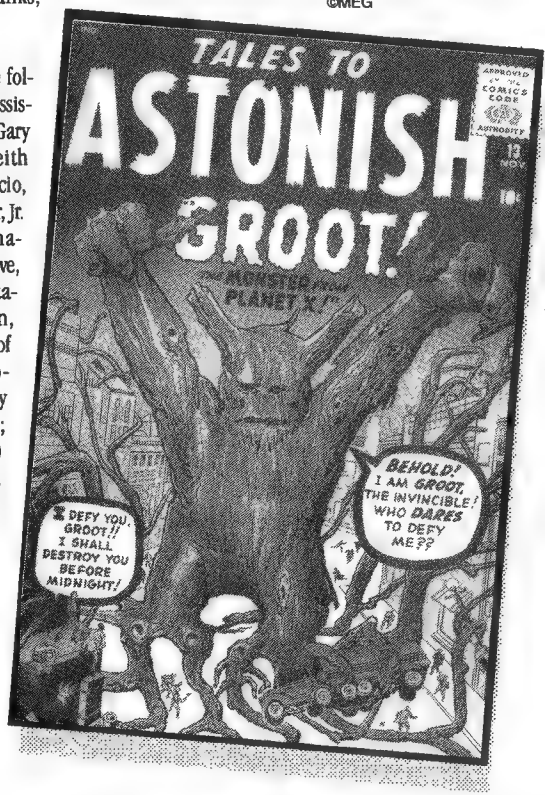


ABOVE
Tales To Astonish #20 (Jun 1961)
©MEG
BELOW
Tales To Astonish #13 (Nov 1960)
©MEG

Conclusion

The monster era was ending even before *FF* #1. Popularity was declining, and Lee was casting around for new ideas. The Marvel Universe provided fantastic, monstrous characters—and the reader got to know them. When will the monsters return? They already have, in the characters we know, from 1961 until now. Thanks, Jack and Stan.

Thanks also to the following for research assistance: Pat Calhoun, Gary M. Carter, Keith Contarino, Larry Curcio, and Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr. for historical information, social perspective, and artwork consultation; Ray Wyman, author of "The Art of Jack Kirby" (co-researched by Katherine Hohlfeld; 1992; Blue Rose Press) for Kirby information; Mike Kadin, artist, for statistical help; and Joe Rainone for providing a number of cover photos; and the staff at Kinko's Copy Center in Tustin, California, for their valuable assistance. ■


TALES TO
ASTONISH
GROOT!
and MONSTER FROM PLANET X!
I DEFY YOU, GROOT!! I SHALL DESTROY YOU BEFORE MIDNIGHT!
BEHOLD! I AM GROOT, THE INVINCIBLE! WHO DARES TO DEFY ME??

HATT TORCH PRESENTS...
Nickie & Tom:
Golden Adventures
in a
Silver Age
KLINK
SHH! QUIET OR POP'LL FIND OUT WE'RE READING HIS COMICS!
BUT NICKIE, I DIDN'T DO THAT!
ZOWIE!
CAN YOU BELIEVE THESE SILVER AGE COMICS?!
SOMEWHERE IN SUBURBIA:
WOW!
THESE JACK KIRBY MONSTERS ARE REAL SCARY, NICKIE.
I KNOW. IT'S ALMOST LIKE THEY'RE REAL!
NICKIE, I'M SCARED!
...IT'S ONLY A COMIC!
DON'T BE SILLY...
TORCH

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A CONVERSATION WITH JACK BURNLEY

BY CHARLIE ROBERTS

THIS INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED ON FEBRUARY 2, 1992.

Charlie Roberts: *Where and when were you born Jack?*
Jack Burnley: I was born in New York City in 1911.
Charlie: *How did you get started in the cartoon business?*
Jack: I was something of a precocious kid, drawing and reading at a very early age. When I was 14, my older sister eventually brought me to King Features Syndicate in 1925. I was still wearing knickers at that time. Boys didn't wear long trousers until they were 15 or 16 years old back then.

BELOW: Jack Burnley's own creation, Starman, delivers an uppercut in a recent sketch. Starman's poss is taken from the original Burnley cover of Adventure Comics #67, originally published in October of 1941.
Starman ©DC

Jack Lait, who was one of the editors, saw some of my work and was impressed enough to give me a job. He figured that I would learn by being around the cartoonists. He put a drawing board in the art department and gave me $20 a week to do nothing really but just learn. It was like being an apprentice. It was like the artists in Michelangelo's time, who learned the trade by spending time as an apprentice. That's just exactly what my first job was like.

I remember there were five or six cartoonists working there at the time. Cliff Sterrett, George McManus, Walter Hoban and Harry Hershfield worked there and had their own offices. The art department was a separate room.

I often showed my stuff to the cartoonists in the office in order to get pointers and suggestions. That was one of the things I was supposed to do in order to learn. I eventually helped them out by doing backgrounds, inking and so on. I did lettering for Hershfield, and for Jimmy Murphy who did "Toots and Casper". I lettered for him on a regular basis for quite a long time, and also for Cliff Sterrett who did "Polly and Her Pals". At times, artists would need to re-use old strips if they were sick or way behind schedule, so I would letter new dialogue balloons and paste them over the old balloons on the art.

Charlie: *What was one of your earliest ideas?*
Jack: One of the strips I submitted when I went to see Jack Lait was a boxing strip. The curious part about it was that it was before Ham Fisher and "Joe Palooka". My character was also named Palooka... nothing unusual about that, Palooka was a common name then for a bum fighter. I called the strip "Charlie and Joe". Charlie was "Charlie Palooka" and Joe was the manager. The coincidence was that they looked very much like "Joe Palooka" and his manager. The fighter was a big blonde pug-nosed heavyweight and the manager was a small guy with a mustache.

I had given these strips to Hershfield to looked over for criticism and never got them back. I

found out later that Ham Fisher was a very good friend of Hershfields and he went up to see him often. Fisher was a syndicate salesman at the time. I have no proof that Fisher saw my strip through Hershfield, but it is an amazing coincidence.

Charlie: *What were your favorite strips back then?*

Jack: My favorite strips were "Krazy Kat" by George Herriman and "Barney Google" by Billy DeBeck. I never met those two great cartoonists, but I did become good friends with Paul Fung, Sr. A most talented ghost artist, he never had much success with his own strips though.

Charlie: *You are known as an avid sports fan. Did you ever have the opportunity to see any of the great sports legends?*

Jack: Yes I did. I was an avid sports fan, and I feel lucky that I was fortunate enough to be living in what is called the "Golden Age of sports" as well as the "Golden Age of comics." I remember getting to see several legendary characters.

For instance, one time my older brother took me to see Jack Dempsey work out around 1920 or 1921. Dempsey was training for his fight with Bill Brennan in Madison Square Garden. My brother took me to see him work out in an open air stadium in upper Manhattan between Riverside Drive and Broadway. It was the same stadium they used sometimes at night for open air movies and sometimes for an ice rink in winter. They'd set up a fight ring and charge 50 cents to get in and see the fighters work out. Dempsey had a big black sparring partner named Bill Tate who just towered over Dempsey. Dempsey was, by today's standards, comparatively small. He weighed about 190 pounds and was around 6' 1". He was a tough looking fellow, part Indian I believe, and always suntanned with a three day growth of beard. He looked mean and was strictly a slugger, not a "true" boxer. He'd whale away at Bill Tate, who only escaped serious damage because both men wore the big training gloves. Even with the big gloves, Dempsey was known to sometimes knock down his sparring partners, although I never personally saw him do this. I remember that Dempsey had this high pitched voice even though he looked like a brute. There would be a ripple of laughter from the crowd when they heard this voice calling for something from "Doc" Kearns.

I also saw Babe Ruth hit home runs a number of times. I lived in the upper West side of Manhattan off Riverside Drive. The Polo Grounds where the "Giants" played was also the same ball park where the "Yankees" played, around 157th Street on the upper West side. We lived around 139th Street, so it was only a couple of subway stops away.

I'd go up after school, buy a 60 cent ticket, and sit in the bleachers. They were always daytime games which started at 3:15 or 3:30. During the summers I'd be there as much as I could. I saw Ruth pitch and hit home runs many times. He was a great pitcher originally. After the "Yankees" would clinch the pennant (which was often fairly early in season in those days), he'd go out and pitch a few innings. It seems I've always been interested in sports.

ABOVE:
A recent rendition of the "world's finest" team by their world-class illustrator.
Superman & Batman ©DC

Charlie: *How did you start doing the sports cartoons?*

Jack: I started going to Stillman's Gym in New York and would do drawings of the boxers. I got to know them. I got to go in the dressings rooms and so on. I started drawing in a more serious vein, doing portraits of the boxers. The cartoonist whose work I followed the most was Ripley, who did sports cartoons before he did "Believe It Or Not". Will Gould, who later did a strip called "Red Barry", was another sports cartoonist I admired.

Eventually I got the attention of Joe Connolly the editor and showed him some of my sports cartoons. I got my own syndicated sports cartoon in 1929. At that time I was the youngest cartoonist to have a syndicated feature as far as I know. It was a three column cartoon of some sports character and the caption varied according to the subject. I also did a little story to accompany it. The papers that took it could run the cartoon separately or run it with the story. I had to keep at least two and one half weeks ahead, and it was very difficult doing sports. You had to check on what was coming up and be as timely as you could. I had a three year contract doing six cartoons a week. I was very busy and didn't have much of a childhood, as I worked from age 14 on and didn't even finish high school.

The sports feature lasted about nine years and was syndicated around the country, but not in New York City. It was kind of disappointing because nobody I knew saw it. In 1938, King

Features Syndicate bought Central Press, a midwestern syndicate, and they already had a sports cartoonist. I had a six months notice clause and started to look for other work.

I worked on a few sample comic strips but nothing clicked. My wife Dolores, who was a very well known dancer and singer in New York City, was a friend of Damon Runyan the famous writer. Damon was writing a column about a character named "Joe Turp", who was sort of a home spun character, and his wife Ethel. It was written in sort of a slang style Runyan was noted for. The column was syndicated, and he suggested that I make up a strip. I made up half a dozen or ten strips and submitted them to Ward Greene and nothing came of it, but I did get a spot illustrating Runyan's short stories. I got a lot of publicity and a good chunk of money from that.

I did some additional drawings and illustrations for "American Weekly", which was Hearst's magazine section. I became good friends with Hearst editor, Chester Weil, and he suggested I look into comic books. He sent me over to a publishing company that later was taken over by "Hillman Periodicals". I made up a series called "Bullet Bob", a non-costumed hero who had fantastic underwater adventures. That comic that I drew in 1938 came out about 1941 (three years later) in a comic book called "Miracle Comics"

I knew "Detective Comics" was the place to be and went there with samples. Whitney Ellsworth came out and said, "Come right in. I remember your work". The year was 1939.

Charlie: *How did you feel about working in comic books?*

Jack: I needed the job, but I considered it a step down to go from a newspaper syndicated feature to comic books. Comic books today have a much better reputation, but at that time they were not considered a top job for an artist. Salary was a little less, $125 a week in the beginning and later $150 a week. A lot of the other artists worked on a "piece work" basis, paid by the piece. I always worked at home, not at the office. The office was what they called the "bullpen". Ellsworth knew he wanted me. I had nine years experience and most of the other fellows were kids really, 19 or 20 years old. Fred Ray was, I think 18 at the time. Kane was a little older, only a few years younger than I. They were worried about the rough style of most of their young artists so they put me on their showcase magazine at the time, World's Fair Comics 1940. It was my first job for DC..

That comic was pretty important. The cover is the first time in the history of comics that Batman and Superman were ever together on a cover, and it's the first time a Superman story and a Batman story were ever published in the same comic book.

In terms of my personal history, the book has my first published cover, and the Superman episode in it was my first published story. It should probably also be noted for comic book history buffs that the Superman story in New York World's Fair 1940 was the first one that was ever done by an artist other than Joe Shuster.

Charlie: *Did you do both pencils and inks for the cover and Superman story in New York World's Fair 1940?*

Jack: Yes, I did the pencils and inks, and even the lettering.

Charlie: *Did you write the story?*

Jack: I never wrote stories, although I did change and rewrite some of the "Starman" scripts, because it was my character. But with the others, I never changed anything.

Charlie: *How did you go about drawing the stories?*

Jack: I was given a script with the name of the writer on it

"The Good Superman Artist"

Superman was, and still is, my favorite comic book character. Here was a guy who could virtually do anything except become invisible. He could fly, lift cars, see through walls, and survive under water. Pretty exciting for a seven or eight year old.

As the '50s became the '60s I learned that fandom had affectionately dubbed Carl Barks as "the good duck artist" and Jack Burnley as "the good Superman artist".

In the early 1940s it looked like everybody and his uncle were working on the art for "Superman". We've all heard the phrase "too many cooks spoil the broth". Jack Burnley became a master chef in the "Superman" kitchen, giving us the refined version which we all recognize today.

©DC

In my opinion, the two best Superman covers are issue #1 and issue #24. #1 has the definitive Shuster Superman hovering over an art deco Metropolis at the end of the depression era. Issue #24, which came out in the middle of World War II, is the new refined Jack Burnley Superman which is the version we know today. Here is Superman holding the American flag in a patriotic scene, a true classic which could have easily been a recruiting poster. How could anyone anywhere in the world doubt that we would win the war after seeing that cover?

Jack Burnley's heroes never took themselves too seriously. His World's Finest covers show Superman, Batman, and Robin not just glad to see us, but three guys having a good time during a break or lunch hour. We knew they could fight crime, but it was refreshing to see them share a laugh now and then. Those rather unique covers helped readers feel the characters seem all that much more real.

It was a five hour drive to see Jack Burnley, but also a trip I'd looked forward to for over twenty-five years, since I first saw the cover to Superman #24 in 1966.

Regarding the interview presented in this issue of CBM I'd like to say a few thank yous and give credit where credit is due. Joe Desris (who did such a fine job of research on the Batman comic strip reprint books. I look forward to reading his research on the 1940's Superman comic strip reprint books. I thank Joe for all of his excellent work, Joan for typing, and Jenn for use of equipment. Thanks also to David Siegel for the much hoped for address. But most of all, I thank Jack and Dolores Burnley for their hospitality and patience. Jack, for an artist who "hates" to draw, you were the best in the field, and it was a real honor and privilege to meet you and personally hear your fascinating history. Thanks to all! —Charlie Roberts

which included a panel by panel description. There would be balloons for each character and so on. My job was to create the pictures. Often it was quite a challenge.

Charlie: *Did you work with Joe Shuster or Bob Kane?*

Jack: The other artists worked with and under the supervision of the creators. Usually Kane and Shuster would supervise things very closely at the beginning. The artists that "assisted" would usually be inking backgrounds and other chores of that sort. When I drew "Superman" and "Batman" stories and covers, I worked independently without any supervision from either Shuster or Kane. This was unusual and marked something new in the history of the Superman and Batman characters.

Charlie: *Who came up with the cover ideas?*

Jack: Whitney Ellsworth gave me the ideas for the covers. Ellsworth would do a dummy sketch to show you what the figures were doing on the cover and the idea behind it and I would execute the finished cover.

The one exception was the "Starman" Adventure Comics covers. I was completely on my own with "Starman".

Charlie: *What was the first Superman story you ever drew?*

Jack: The first "Superman" story I remember doing had a circus theme with a strong man named "Herculo" and a plot where Superman flies up to rescue a falling trapeze artist. They didn't actually publish that story until the September 1940 issue of "Action Comics". My New York World's Fair Superman story was published earlier, in March 1940.

Charlie: *Did you ever meet Joe Shuster or Bob Kane during the early years at DC?*

Jack: Joe Shuster always worked out of Cleveland, so I only met him once in Ellsworth's office. I seem to remember that Bob Kane didn't mingle much with the artists. He would come in, whiz right past them, and go immediately into Liebowitz' office.

Charlie: *Whom on the DC staff were you closest to?*

Jack: Ellsworth was the closest friend I had in those early days. Dolores and I would go to dinner with him at his favorite steak house. He was always very friendly. I would also see Jerry Robinson and Fred Ray, from time to time, when I would come into the office.

Charlie: *What was working at home like?*

Jack: It was hard work. The first three or four years I would pencil and ink all the art. My brother Ray (whose real name was Dupree), would ink the backgrounds and my sister Betty Bentley did the lettering. They worked with me at my place in Flushing, Long Island. I would either send or bring the art in, or my father-in-law or brother would bring it in. Then they would pick up the next assignments.

Charlie: *Did you do any merchandising work for DC?*

Jack: I did a Sunday comic page for Macy's Christmas Toyland as well as a comic book, "Superman's Christmas Adven-ture". Fred Ray did the cover for it. I saw one of my figures on a billboard advertising gas or oil for cars or something. They used my stuff a lot for promotion. Some of the Batman work I did was for the Batman movie serial. I did no work at all on the Superman animated cartoons.

Charlie: *How did you come to do Starman?*

Jack: After about a year of working on Superman, they decided to give me a character of my own. The art was done in a more sedate comic strip style than the usual exaggerated style. I got to sign Starman because it was my character. I thought it might build into something and they had high hopes for it at the time too. But it just didn't take off. It wasn't innovative enough. The costume was an imitation of Superman, just a different color. I always felt that Starman should have been more mysterious looking. I also felt that the scripts I got were not very good either. I changed them around a lot, usually for pictorial effects, but that didn't seem to help.

Incidentally, some have suggested that Gardner Fox was the co-creator of Starman. Actually, Gardner Fox had nothing whatsoever to do with the creation. The co-creators were Murray Boltinoff and several other DC editors, all of whom made suggestions and contributed a bit.

After a year with Starman, I went back to working on the top features. I worked several months on the Justice Society in All Star for Sheldon Mayer, but eventually I had about enough of that. You had seven or

Two classic Starman covers by Jack Burnley—
LEFT:
Adventure Comics #61 (Apr 1941) 1st appearance of Starman. ©DC
BELOW:
Adventure Comics #63 (Jun 1941) 3rd appearance of Starman. ©DC

eight characters and had to draw these big scenes. It was just incredibly hard and way too much work.

Then I got back into Batman. My first cover was Batman #9, the spotlight cover. One of my first stories was "The Cop Who Hated Batman". Detective #65 (July 1942) which was reprinted in the "Batman Archives". I continued doing Batman stories and occasional covers until about 1944 when they started the "Batman" comic strip. I also did some Superman stories for awhile. I did Superman Sunday pages in 1943 and 1944. I penciled the Sunday pages, Charlie Paris was the inker. I also did a few dailies. One time I got called into the office. They had gotten some dailies in from Cleveland, and they claimed Superman's head didn't look right. Shuster had stopped inking the heads, and they felt that Wayne Boring hadn't gotten them quite the way they wanted. I "fixed" them by pasting a bunch of new heads over the old heads on about two weeks of strips. Eventually, Boring became the premiere Superman artist doing the archetypal hero of the 50's.

My principal work after Starman were Superman covers. Some fans have told me that they feel my version helped change the image of the man of steel to a more modern and realistically drawn Superman. It was largely through the covers that that change was accomplished. I didn't do as many Batman covers, as I did stories.

Charlie: *How about your work for the daily newspapers?*

Jack: At one time I had Superman Sunday pages and Batman Sunday pages running at the same time in the "New York Mirror". Ellsworth called me in and said, "Kane can't do both the dailies and Sundays. How about you taking over the Sundays?" After Kane's first two series, I penciled all of the Sundays except for one sequence when Jack Schiff switched me over to the dailies, and for a short period when I was ill and Fred Ray did some.

If the Batman strip hadn't folded, I might have stayed with it for awhile. It was syndicated, and I could draw it in a non comic book style. Then I went back to stories and covers till I left DC.

Charlie: *What made you decide to leave DC?*

Jack: I got a call from Ward Greene wanting to know if I wanted to get back into sport cartoons. I said "yeah"! He sent me to see J. D. Gortatowsky who was General Manager of the "Hearst" newspapers. Gordy recommended me for the position of sports cartoonist on the "Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph", a "Hearst" paper with a one year contract. Ellsworth was disappointed, but I explained to him the work was easier and money went a lot further in Pittsburgh than in New York. So that was the end of my comics career, from 1939 to 1947. There was a time about a year later that I had a chance to come back to comics, but the work had gotten a lot more complicated, so I decided to stay with sports.

I stayed in Pittsburgh about four years and then had a chance to go to San Francisco with "Scripps-Howard" instead of "Hearst". We made the move, and I went to work for the "San Francisco News". I went through two mergers with them as they became the "Call-Bulletin", then the "Examiner". Sports cartooning became a lost art, due to television sports and photos replacing art on the sports page. I began doing general art department work, layouts, photo retouching, cartoons, etc. I stayed with the "Examiner" until I retired in 1976. We moved to Virginia to be closer to relatives.

Charlie: *Are you enjoying getting some recognition for your work in comics?*

Jack: Yes, but I am a quiet shy person and don't like crowds. I do enjoy getting mail and hearing from fans though. It's nice to see my work being reprinted after all of these years, especially with the right credits.

Charlie: *Which of your projects are you most proud of?*

Jack: I like the Batman and Superman Sunday pages and some of the sports cartoons are pretty good.

Charlie: *Do you have any advice for beginning artists?*

Jack: Yes, first copy your favorite artist's work, and then work hard to develop your own style. As to getting work, it's a lot harder now than when I started. Send in a lot of samples, and don't give up.

Charlie: *What do you think of today's comics?*

Jack: In some ways the new comics are too complex and too sophisticated. In my view, comic books should be entertainment. I don't think comics are the place for dark and brooding complex themes.

Charlie: *What are some of your other interests besides comics?*

Jack: I enjoy reading and music. I was always interested in classical philosophy and medieval philosophy and theology.

Charlie: *One last question Jack. What did you think of the "Batman" movie?*

Jack: It was well done, but I would have preferred a little more humor. I actually enjoyed the television show. The original intent of the Batman strip was more tongue-in-cheek than you think.

Charlie: *Thank you for sharing some of your personal history with CBM readers Mr. Burnley.*

Jack: Thank you, Charlie… I enjoyed it. ■

SOME OF THE MANY JACK BURNLEY COVER CREDITS 1940-1947

Action Comics 48, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 71, 74, 79, 82, 84, 85, 86, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 107, and 108.

Adventure Comics 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 116, 117, 118, 119, and 120.

All Star Comics 12 and 13.

Batman 9, 15, 27, 28, 40, and 42.

Detective Comics 78, 83, 96, 105, 121, 123, and 125.

New York World's Fair 1940.

Star Spangled Comics 72.

Superman 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 30, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, and 45.

World's Finest Comics 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31.

Assignment #1: NY World's Fair 1940

Jack Burnley's vision of Batman

BY JOE DESRIS

"When I came to DC," recalls Jack Burnley, "with my background, I was supposed to be their top ghost artist. I was older and more experienced than practically any of their artists. They figured I had the experience to do either of their top features, Superman or Batman. My first assignment was the New York Wold's Fair cover." Penciling and inking this 1940 cover, Burnley became the third person ever to draw Batman and Robin, following Bob Kane and Jerry Robinson. (Note: George Roussos, at least up to this point, as well as Sheldon Moldoff, had only worked on backgrounds.)

The artistic contrasts between regular Superman cartoonists and Burnley were probably more apparent than between Burnley and regular Superman cartoonists and Burnley were probably more apparent than between Burnley and regular Batman artists. But even though slightly muted to emulate Kane, Burnley's realistic Batman still stood out. A more stylized Batman could be found in work by Robinson, certainly Kane, and later on, in Dick Sprang. "I tried to keep a little closer to Bob Kane's style than Jerry Robinson did," continues Burnley. "Jerry'

s stuff was very different from Kane. He had a sort of fluid, graceful style which was nice, but it was so obviously different from Kane's style that I think that even the young people at the time could see the difference. I tried to steer sort of a middle ground there. I tried to keep a little closer to Kane's while doing it in a little more realistic style."

Burnley's realism had a strong, 14-year foundation in sports cartooning. Because of this background, his experience and realistic artistic abilities, he became DC's top ghost artist, working on the company's main characters and best titles, including Detective Comics, Batman, and World's Finest Comics. He penciled approximately 100 covers at DC, inking about half of them, and did many stories as well.

"The favorite stories were usually humorous," notes Burnley. "My favorite comic book story that I worked on was the one they used in The Greatest Batman Stories, 'The Knights of Knavery'. The Joker and the Penguin teamed up in crime. Anyway, I thought the whole story was pretty fun."

From 1943 on, most of Burnley's comic book story output was Batman related. He penciled nearly all of the Batman and Robin Sunday newspaper strip were penciled by Burnley during 1943 and 1944, making him the first artist to work on both superhero strips.

His precisely penciled pages contained every detail, making the job easier for inkers. While Burnley's editors may have occasionally complained about his lack of speed, they felt strongly about the quality of his work. "Murray Boltinoff told me," says Burnley, "that some DC artists were goofing off with very rough and sketchy pencils, forcing the inker to do much of the actual drawing. Boltinoff had a photostatic copy made of one of my Sunday pages while still in pencil form." These stats were used to show other pencilers what they should be doing. Two Sunday halves, the only known surviving examples of Burnley's Golden Age work in pencil form, were reproduced in Batman: The Sunday Classics, 1943-1946, (published by Kitchen Sink Press/DC Comics, 1991).

In spite of artistic abilities that placed him well above most of his contemporaries, Burnley generally didn't think much of the work he was doing and considered his eight years at DC an interim job. "I was just looking for something to do until I could get back into newspaper cartooning," he says. "It was a little too hard for me. The stuff was getting more elaborate all the time, too. You actually got more and more details and stuff in it. I was not originally a comic book artist and I had to sort of adapt my work to that format. I enjoyed doing the Batman Sunday pages more than any other comic book work that I did. I liked the scripts. If that had continued, I think regardless, I would have stayed on. But just about that time, that was the end of the Batman strip." After Batman and Robin was canceled in 1946, Burnley mainly illustrated covers. He left DC in August 1947.

Such self-criticism could lead those unfamiliar with Burnley's efforts to think the man was a hack. Certainly the opposite was (and remains) true; his work typically was highly polished. Someone else's bad inking could bury Burnley's material, although this rarely occurred. His years of experience with sports cartoons, and their demand for accurate, photo-realistic likenesses of well-known personalities, proved an invaluable training ground for illustrating superheroes in believable, real-world surroundings. His past work still remains enjoyable today, and as classic material, has not become dated.

Although he has not lost his accurate artistic touch, Burnley has repeatedly turned down request for recreations of his comic book work, generally due to health difficulties. In the 45 years since he left comics, Burnley has drawn only a handful of superhero pieces for relatives and friends. An illustration of Batman and Robin capturing Penguin sold in the October 31, 1992 Christie's auction for $1,650, marking the first time a Burnley recreation was ever for sale. ■

ORIGINAL ARTWORK FROM THE FINAL SCENE OF THE DEATH OF SUPERMAN

THE GREATEST COMIC AUCTION EVER...

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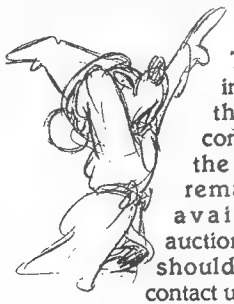
Guernsey's, the leader in unique auctions, is honored to present what may well be the finest auction in the related fields of Comic, Comic Book & Fantasy Art, Animation, and Film. The massive, three day auction will offer over 2,000 lots of some of the most interesting and rare materials in these areas of collecting. In addition to comic, comic book & fantasy art, large collections of film ephemera and animation will be sold. New York City's Puck Building (in the city's artistic Soho area) is the setting for the auction which will be taking place February 5th, 6th & 7th, with a day devoted to each category. The precise schedule, along with previewing activities will be indicated in the massive catalogue currently in production.

A small sampling of the extraordinary items to be sold would include the following: **COMIC ART: "Death of Superman"** - all the artwork from the extra-ordinary issue Superman #75, and the finest presentation of original artwork by Winsor McCay. Additionally, early artwork from Milt Caniff, Al Capp, and prominent paintings by fantasy stars Frank Frazetta and Boris Vallejo will be included. Many stunning examples of high grade Golden and Silver Age comic books will be featured. "Unread" examples, full run and unique artwork and paintings just begin to tell the story of this fabulous auction.

ANIMATION: The entire body of work from the master animator Preston Blair will represent approximately a quarter of this event. The Blair segment will include 500 original animation art drawings from Disney's landmark film "Fantasia", with Mickey Mouse as the Sorcerer's Apprentice and Hyacinth the Hippo as the featured characters. Mr. Blair went on to create magnificent animation for the Tex Avery Studio and, notably, this auction will include the only known cels (200 in number) from the remarkable "Red Hot Riding Hood". **FILM:** An extensive array of movie posters will be sold, ranging from the most exciting American films from the 20's - 50's on to offerings such as a collection of German multi-sheet posters of Garbo and Dietrich. Perhaps the finest collection of heralds, press books, original film art, window and lobby cards will also be included. King Kong and The Bride of Frankenstein are just two of the remarkable titles to be sold.

INFO & THE CATALOGUE: But this is just the beginning. To appreciate the full diversity of this extraordinary auction - an auction where most of the lots will be sold without minimum reserve - please contact Guernsey's. The 250+ page catalogue is $28 by mail (from Guernsey's). Those wishing bidder information or to discuss the possibility of late consigning fine material to the few remaining available auction slots should also contact us.



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Many CBM *readers might recall what was arguably the biggest controversy to rock the comic book collecting world of the mid 70s. To be specific, the year was 1974. The battle, metaphorically speaking, was Sub-Mariner vs. Sub-Mariner. The books were the rare* Marvel Comics #1, *and the even rarer and suddenly discovered* Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1. *Amid the flurry of the new discovery, a number of collectors suggested and attempted to confirm* Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1 *as the first appearance of Bill Everett's Sub-Mariner, and therefore one of the most historic and most valuable comic books known. What follows is background information and evidence which just might change your viewpoint! So read on dear reader... read on!*

THE HISTORY, CONTENTS, & CONTROVERSY OF MARVEL COMICS No. 1

By Warren Reece

THE HISTORY

Publication

The flagship title of Timely Publications (which became the Marvel Comics Group of today and gave the top selling company its name), *Marvel Comics #1* had a first-printing cover date of October 1939. Copies probably went on sale around August of that year, and may have been test marketed in selected cities. One of the fans who actually purchased his copy from the stands in one of these cities (Philadelphia) confirms both place and time. A second version, in which the front cover and indicia dates were overstruck to change the October dating to November, was then printed. Most of the surviving copies of *Marvel Comics #1* are dated November. When copies of the title arrived in Washington for official copyrighting in September of 1939, the company sent copies of the #2 issue instead of the #1. Issue #2 had been re-titled *Marvel Mystery Comics.*

The Father of Marvel

Publisher Martin Goodman had been producing pulp magazines for several years. With a keen sense of what the public wanted, he noted the interest in the colorful little sixty-four page magazines carrying cartoons, and determined to get in on the action. Two of his pulps were *The Adventures Of Ka-Zar The Great*, whose first issue was dated October 1936, and *Marvel Stories* the debut date of which was August 1938.

Although neither magazine was a commercial success, both were to effect their influences on Mr. Goodman. His premiere comic book was to remain, primarily, in the heroic science fiction and adventure genres. Its title, *Marvel Comics*, not only used the "Marvel" from its pulp counterpart, but also used the actual style of the logo beginning with the third issue. As for Ka-Zar, he and his supporting cast not only became a long running feature, but the first five installments were close adaptations of the first issue of *The Adventures Of Ka-Zar The Great* adventure pulp magazine.

Funnies Incorporated

Like a number of other early publishers entering the comic/cartoon book field in the dawn of the Golden Age, Mr.

Goodman did not have an editorial and art staff with cartooning experience. The solution to the problems inherent in this situation was provided in a small, somewhat shabby, little building on West 45th Street in Manhattan, not too far from Goodman's offices. There, editor Lloyd V. Jacquet, his assistant Mickey Spillane (the one who eventually gave us Mike Hammer!), writer John Compton, art director and artist-writer Bill Everett, artist-writers Carl Burgos and Paul Gustavson, gag cartoonist Fred Schwab, and even outstanding science fiction freelance artist Frank R. Paul, were waiting to provide Mr. Goodman with the stories, art, and creative supervision, for his Marvel Comics. Some of these people worked as staff, freelance, or as rate-compensated contributors. Others (reportedly) worked as partners in the cartoon service known as Funnies Incorporated.

Their salesman was a very effective fella by the name of Frank Torpey, whose family name was given to the chemical works featured in the Human Torch vs. Sub-Mariner story in *Marvel Mystery Comics* #s 8, 9, and 10. Frank has been credited with convincing Mr. Goodman to enter the comic book field in general, and to go with Funnies Incorporated in particular. Since Funnies reportedly lacked the cash and business experience to become a publishing house and Mr. Goodman lacked a cartooning staff, neither party was able to make significant progress alone. Together they made a viable entity even though they were not exclusively bound to one another. After all, this was business, not marriage! Still, the results for Mr. Goodman's account proved to be tremendous.

The Contents

A Marvel in More Ways Than One

Marvel Comics #1 proved to be a comic magazine that was not, essentially, comic in nature. Furthermore, its supercharged contents not only covered a wide range of adventure themes, but also juxtaposed two elementally-opposite characters. The impact of its contents made Marvel more than just a title word on the mag's logo.

Cover by a Science Fiction Master

The outside front cover featured a unique and demonic interpretation of the Human Torch about to exact revenge on grenade-chucking gang leader Tony Sardo. This spectacular, if bizarre rendering of the soon-to-be famous blazing hero, was the work of Frank R. Paul.

Mr. Paul, a licensed architect, was already famous for the fantastic cover paintings he had done for the likes of *Amazing Stories* and its companion magazines. *Amazing Stories*, credited as having been the first magazine devoted to the genre of science fiction, was a product of the Experimenter Publishing Company, founded in 1926. Mr. Paul has to be credited with much of the famous magazine's early success and was the favorite artistic contributor of editor-publisher Hugo Gernsback. Although his cover for *Marvel Comics #1* was not typical of his best work, it nevertheless remains important if for no other reason than his work upon it ... and unusual work, at that.

The inside front cover consisted of a series of gag cartoons, under the title, "Now I'll Tell One". These were rendered in truly comic style. The sprightly "fellah" behind these cartoons was Fred Schwab. Fred's little gags graced a number of eventually "pricey" Golden Age mags, including *Action Comics #1*; and (yes), *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1*. Throughout his travels, Fred was known for his habit of making cartoon sketches of people in little notebooks and such. This practice he carried into later life with boyish enthusiasm.

Red Hot Headliner

Leading the way in the book itself was the Human Torch. The name was actually a misnomer, for he wasn't (biologically speaking) human. His creator, Professor Horton, never meant his experimental man to be a Torch. Rather, this scientific brainchild was a robot. Moreover, according to the fourth *Fantastic Four Annual* (published in 1967) the Human Torch was the world's first android, which may be understood to be, chemically and structurally, a much closer approximation of a human being than a traditional "nuts and bolts" robot.

Certainly, the "android's" properties evidenced this difference. The story that introduced the Torch and Professor Horton, presented the press corps, and later, a frantic city, with an android who blazed uncontrollably when exposed to sufficient oxygen, while not being consumed in the process. As biology students know, the metabolism within living cells is actually a slow burning of nutrients and oxygen to produce power and heat. The Torch did this on a violently pronounced scale, apparently regenerating in the process.

The story depicted the android's entombment in concrete, his explosive

escape from the supposedly airtight encasement, the damage and panic caused by his blazing "rampage" through city streets, and his accidental entrapment in a protection racket scheme by the Sardo Gang. Subsequently, the Torch realized he had been used for criminal activity, leading him to a revenge encounter with Sardo and the mob. The encounter proved predictably fatal to the criminals. During the battle in Sardo's lab, the Torch accidentally discovered that nitrogen temporarily snuffed his flame. Further exposure to the gas helped give the android total control over his flame power. Finally, in what appeared to be an accidentally fatal encounter with Professor Horton at the scientist's estate, the Torch flew off, vowing never again "to be used for selfish gain or crime".

TIMELY/MARVEL COMICS MAY NOT HAVE BEEN KING OF THE EARLY COLLECTIBLES MARKET, BUT *MARVEL COMICS #1* ROSE TO THE TOP SPOT AMONG COLLECTIBLE COMIC BOOKS

The art was drawn by the venerable Carl Burgos. As a former employee of the Franklin Engraving Company, Burgos had viewed many pages of original cartoon art. Carl's work in most of the panels was probably a little crude by contemporary standards. Nevertheless, a close examination of a copy of *Marvel Comics #1* reveals something lost in subsequent reprints, namely the many fine pen lines he inked in his renderings of the Torch. These not only represented the flames, but also, modeled the contours of the Torch's form with a degree of quality that needs no apology. Although the story lacks a detailed origin the anti-gang theme made it powerful and timely and the characters, though perhaps a bit simplified, were well-defined.

A Saintly Punisher

Following the Torch in the book was the Angel, by Paul Gustavson. Clad in a red and blue costume, The Angel was all-too-similar to Superman's (except for the golden angel wings on the chest and the buskin-like footwear). Sporting brown hair and a mustache, the Angel was a secret vigilante who frequently was involved in fatal encounters with criminals and supernatural enemies. The debut story, almost identical to "The Saint In New York" by Leslie Charteris, depicted the acrobatic, hard-fighting Angel's hunt for The Six Big Men. The six were a syndicate of gang leaders, each of whom specialized in a specific kind of criminal activity. The law, it seemed, couldn't stop them, bribery and intimidation ran from the lowest depths to the highest echelons of society.

The Angel's violent and fatal encounters with his adversaries have made him "The Punisher Of Yesteryear" in the minds of some. His discovery of "respectable citizens" secretly running mob activities in this excellent debut story was quite compelling. Gustavson's art was simple but pleasing and his stories and dialogue interesting and effective. This was true not only in the strips debut in Marvel Comics #1, but in later Angel appearances as well.

Supporting Features

The *Marvel Comics #1* line-up includes several other features to fill the sixty-four pages. "The Masked Raider" by Al Anders, was a western hero not unlike the Lone Ranger. The origin showed how rancher Jim Gardley took on his disguise to battle a syndicate trying to acquire land by forcing owners off. Although a gangland horse opera, it nevertheless spoke to readers of the Thirties about mob activities still alive in their own culture. It was the first Marvel Comics western.

A filler, "Jungle Terror" by Tom Dixon, was a one-shot done in a semi-realistic drawing style (Fred Schwab's works being the exception). Next, "Burning Rubber", a race car story by Raymond Gill, gave the mag enough straight "text" to fulfill the Post Office Department's requirements for inexpensive second class mailing rates. Then, finishing the page count, was the first Marvel Comics adaptation. Episode one of "The Adventures Of Ka-Zar The Great", from the Goodman pulp magazine.

Ka-Zar was not the same character later introduced in *X-Men* #10 in March 1965, although there are observable similarities. This early Ka-Zar was, instead, David Rand, son of wealthy diamond mine owners John and Constance Rand. David was raised by his widowed father in the wilds of the Congo after their plane crashed. Episode one, based on Bob Byrd's original story, was a very good one, and re-introduced the Ka-Zar cast to comic book readers. Of note is the long roster of recurring supporting cast animals. Nono (David's monkey companion), Trajah The Elephant, Kru The Vulture, N'Jaga The Leopard, Sha The Lioness, and best of all, Sha's mate, Zar The Lion. Zar saved young David from quicksand, and from villain Paul DeKraft who murdered John Rand. David, thenceforth, lived with Zar, and became known as Ka-Zar (meaning, "brother of Zar"). The drawings were rendered by Ben Thompson.

The First Marvel Mutant

Saving the best for last, let's examine the debut story of Prince Namor. The initial story was simply entitled, "The Sub-Mariner". It introduced a number of important characters who were to appear again and again over the decades: Prince Namor, approximately nineteen years of age, poised on the brink of his mission as "The Avenging Son"; his mother, the beautiful, strong-willed Princess Fen; his grandfather, the Emperor, later known as Tha-Korr; and his adventurous young cousin, Princess Dorma.

The twelve-page premiere can, upon close examination, be divided into two distinct sequences of eight and four pages. In the first part, readers were given nearly everything they needed to know about Namor in the mast-head panel's caption:

"Here is the Sub-Mariner! - An ultra-man of the deep ... lives on land and in the sea ... flies in the air ... has the strength of a thousand men ... is a youth of dynamic personality ... quick thought and fast action ... From whence does he come, and what is his mission?"

The answers came in eight amazing pages, as salvage divers from the SS. Recovery, working in Antarctic waters, were mistaken as menacing robots by a handsome man, with demonically-pointed ears and angular facial fea-

tures, clad in simple swim trunks. Killing these apparent monsters, the mysterious swimmer proceeded to force the ship's recovery by thrusting it onto reefs with his great strength.

Bringing the helmeted and suited bodies of the divers to an anchored iceberg palace, he presents them to his grandfather. Upon removing the helmets of the divers, it was realized that these were surface humans: a breed apart from Prince Namor's large-eyed breed of amphibious people, except for one, himself! Princess Fen then told (or retold) how she had met his father, Captain Leonard McKenzie, in 1920, when his expeditionary ship, the Oracle, was dropping depth charges in an attempt to clear a way through dangerous enclosing ice. The explosives caused terrible damage, injury, and death, below, where a city full of amphibious people was lying unsuspected.

Princess Fen, most-nearly resembling the white surface people, was enlisted as a spy. During her trips between the ship and her home, she fell in love with the kind commander of the Oracle and married him, and tried to prevent her people from attacking. A terrible bombardment from above destroyed all but a handful of the Sub-Mariners. Finally, Fen returned to the sea.

However, in the fullness of the months, a child was born to the grieving princess. As the years passed, he presented both hybrid and mutant qualities: that is to say, more vigorous degrees of the natural qualities of his parent races ... fantastically greater! Princess Fen called her child Namor, meaning "avenging son," and raised him to live up to his name with plans to war upon the white men who had nearly obliterated the undersea race. In the last panel of this eight page sequence, Bill Everett, the artist-writer of the series, signed his name, and put the date, 4/39, next to a blank caption box. Then, next page, came a story extension.

In this second sequence, Namor, and his pretty young cousin, Dorma, team-up for vengeance against the surface people. They travel north, come upon the Cape Anna Lighthouse, overcome the keepers, and wreck the equipment, hoping to cause consequent ship wrecks. As sailors spot the intrepid pair, Namor flies Dorma up to a plane, overcomes the pilot, puts Dorma in the unfortunate man's place, and then dives back into the sea.

The story, packed with multiple firsts for the eventual Marvel Comics Group, was resplendent with excellent plot and dialogue, inspired by Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rhyme Of The Ancient Mariner," and in the undersea palace sequences by a Shakespearean kind of parlance. The artwork, though a little more "cartoony" than Everett's later illustrations, was beautiful nevertheless. Rendered on duo-tone "Craftint" illustration board, the art had extra dimension, and a convincing, murky, underwater feeling.

The Controversy

King of the Comic Books

Although Timely/Marvel Comics may not have been king of the early collectible's market, *Marvel Comics #1* eventually rose to the top spot among collectible comic books. Several factors caused this ascension. The most prominent were: (1) the contents were historic, with a multitude of debuts (2) most copies were eventually lost or destroyed thus it was a truly rare item, and (3) the "renaissance" of comic books in the Sixties (largely due to the renewed Marvel Comics Group) re-focused collector attention on the beginnings of the Marvel company.

To get an idea of the rise in value let's look at the genealogy of a specific issue of *Marvel #1*. Consider, if you will, the well documented case of the "Chamber Of Fantasy" copy.

This copy was originally one of perhaps a half-dozen or so October copies on the wall-rack of a drug, candy, or newspaper store, owned by a certain Mr. Edwards, of Philadelphia, in 1939. Paul Zack bought the copy for ten cents. It remained in his possession until around 1967.

Then, Paul sold it for one hundred dollars (then a great deal of money) to young Dave Waxman, of Great Neck, Long Island, NY. Not long afterwards, Dave sold it to the late Phil Seuling, a great dealer of Golden Age mags, pioneer of comicons, and, eventually, the founder of the "Direct Sales" system of comic book distribution. Phil forked out a whopping one-hundred-fifty bucks for the mag.

Finally, in October of 1968 it was purchased from Phil (at the "comic book king's" thirteenth floor apartment on West Twelfth Street, in Brooklyn, New York). The asking price for the copy of *Marvel Comics #1* was $250, an astronomical sum of money for a comic book at that time (a copy had allegedly been sold for

three-hundred-thirty dollars by Howard Rogofsky). Phil accepted two-hundred-twenty dollars.

In 1968, the estimated number of *Marvel Comics #1* specimens known to organized fandom totaled approximately twenty copies. For several years, this (so dubbed) "Chamber Of Fantasy" copy was the only known October copy. Eventually, as *Marvel Comics #1* ascended to multi-thousands of dollars in Overstreet, another "comic book" was discovered that would turn the collecting world topsy turvy!

The New Discovery

In 1974, *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1*, along with cover proofs to the proposed issues two through five, and file copies of *Marvel (Mystery) Comics* numbers one through ten, were discovered in the estate of Funnies Incorporated's John Compton. The books and proofs were purchased by Bob Weiner. There were five or six copies of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1* in the estate. They were, to all accounts, the only known copies. No one in Fandom, it seemed, had ever seen a copy. Out of the five or six, one copy was missing six pages. All of them were placed on consignment with a Boston area comic book dealer.

The "Other" Sub-Mariner

Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1 became a "pretender to the throne" of the most valuable Timely comic book, and, in a manner of speaking, a pretender to the throne of Prince Namor The Sub-Mariner, because of its contents and rarity.

MPFW #1 sported a slick-paper color cover depicted a smiling boy walking off with a ladder being used by a man working on a theater marquee. It was rendered in whimsical comic style by Fred Schwab.

> ***MOTION PICTURE FUNNIES WEEKLY #1***
>
> **BECAME A "PRETENDER TO THE THRONE" OF THE**
>
> **MOST VALUABLE TIMELY COMIC BOOK,**
>
> **AND, OF PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER**

The inside front cover contained an indicia with a copyright date of 1939, though no month was shown. The publisher was listed as First Funnies Incorporated.

Two of its interior stories, printed in black and white, remain memorable. One was "The American Ace," by Paul J. Lauretta. This was a war story about a pilot and mineralogist named Perry Wade, who became entangled in a fictionalized European war situation. The hostile nation was called Castille D'or. Its leader was the beautiful, never-aging, but hateful and scheming Queen Ursula. There was more than a hint of the rising Hitler and Nazi Germany in the plot.

The story was drawn in a simple adventure/romance style. Many of the pages had the logo and illustrated heading on them. It would seem that they may have been done, originally, with a mind towards publication as a Sunday comics section feature in newspapers. Although there is no evidence that they were published in such a manner, "The American Ace" did see print in Marvel Mystery Comics issues two and three. It was not this feature that made big news though.

The main attraction was eight pages of "The Sub-Mariner," as presented in *Marvel Comics #1*, with some differences. For one thing, the last four page "light-house attack sequence," introducing Princess Dorma, was nowhere to be seen. For another, only the black line area was printed. An examination of it reveals the "screens" of the Craft Tint artwork. The black lines were originally printed on the Craft Tint illustration board invisibly. The application of two slightly different chemicals, similar to photographic developers, brought out the black lines of the screens, and the use of the screens, separately or in overlaps, produced different tones of light and dark. Although appearing gray to our human eyes, they were nevertheless black enough for an engraver's camera to transfer to a photo-sensitized printing plate for inexpensive "letterpress" reproduction. Finally, the caption box, at the end of page eight, contained words indicating that the story was to be continued the following week. In the same box was Bill Everett's signature, and the completion date: 4/39.

The back cover of the mag was a solicitation to theater managers. They were told words to the effect that if they wanted to carry a premium like *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly*, that they should contact the publishers. The necessary information was then provided for them to do so.

The Debate Begins

Around 1975, several prominent dealers and collectors suggested that *MPFW* was the first appearance of Sub-Mariner as well as the rarest and most valuable comic in the world. This viewpoint saw print in numerous publications, including the *Buyer's Guide For Comics Fandom* (now *C.B.G.*) published by Alan Light, *The Comics Crusader*, which was Boston-area Martin Greim's forum, and even *Oui Magazine*. These articles suggested that the information in the caption box on page eight of Sub-Mariner, and the use of Craft Tint, were certain proof that Sub-Mariner was intended for publication in *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1*, not *Marvel Comics #1*. They further argued that Craft Tint was used for art intended for black and white publications, and did not accept the counterclaim that Everett had used it, in combination with the eventually-added colors, to achieve an intriguing underwater effect. Even though no copies had been identified as having been distributed to the public, the claim that *M.P.F.W. #1* was an actual appearance of Sub-Mariner, and a genuine comic book (as opposed to a file proof or ashcan copy) was generally accepted by fandom.

Despite all evidence to the contrary, a few stalwart collectors argued against the thesis that the Sub-Mariner story in *Marvel Comics #1* was reprinted from *M.P.F.W.* (to this day, it seems amazing that anyone could have seriously suggested that the plates had been shot from the black and white comic!)

Bill Everett and Ed Lahmann to the Rescue

In the late 1970s, Roy Thomas, a good friend, collaborator, and sometimes roomie of Bill Everett's, published a long-delayed interview with the deceased master in Alter-Ego. In it, Mr. Everett commented on his use of Craft Tint on the first two Sub-Mariner stories, each of which was a different length, by the way. He related how he had used the material to give the feeling of being underwater ... "of depth underwater." He told of the dissatisfaction over the way the printers had handled the coloring, over which the artists (back in those days) had virtually no control; how the second issue had been better, but that still, the "Ben Day" color screens, over the Craft Tint, had produced a muddy effect. What was clear, though, was that Mr. Everett had prepared the art on Craft Tint with the knowledge that it would be colored. One might compare this with the time-honored technique of monochrome underpainting practiced by master-artists working in oils, who, in effect, "colored" over previously prepared darks and lights in their pictures. This supported the idea that *Marvel #1* came first and *MPFW* was reprinted from it.

Then, in September of 1976 two letters from Ed Lahmann were received at the Marvel offices. Mr. Lahmann, who had been buying comics since the early Golden Age had been following the big controversy. He indicated that he owned both *Marvel Comics #1*, and *M.P.F.W. #1* as a boy. He had obtained the movie premium at an Indiana theater, where he had a friendly acquaintance with the manager. However, he emphatically stated that he remembered having *Marvel Comics #1* quite some time before the movie premium. Furthermore, he presented a detailed comparison between the two books, deeming *Marvel Comics #1* as being far superior in printing quality.

The Final Verdict

Around 1980, it was learned that copyright application for *Marvel Comics #1* had been made around June of 1939. Copies of the finished book were actually received by the Library Of Congress in September, along with copies of the second issue, then titled *Marvel Mystery Comics*.

However, not only were no copies of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1* on file, but moreover, no application of copyright had been submitted. This was, and is, the official record, and thus, the strongest argument on which book had come first, and on which book had come out at all!

Furthermore, it was pointed out that the solicitation to the theater managers on the back cover of *M.P.F.W. #1* indicated that the existing copies were samples for the trade only, and had not, in fact, been intended for distribution to the general public.

Mr. Lahmann's old copy had been a sample obtained due to his acquaintance with the local theater's manager. Finally, research into the manufacture of the samples had allegedly revealed that the cover and pages had been printed with a considerable interval of time in between, and were not actually stapled together until 1940! Physical evidence in support of this was seen at the first auction of comic book memorabilia at Sotheby's, early in 1992. Pages from *M.P.F.W.* inside a loose *Marvel Comics* #1 cover (from the John Compton estate), were shown in the sale catalogue. Just one more piece of compelling evidence!

Summary and Conclusions

Marvel Comics #1 and *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1* had their art and editorial content prepared by the staff and freelancers of Funnies Incorporated. As such, although Martin Goodman was financially the publisher of *Marvel Comics* #1, and had final control over it, the influence and discretion of people like Lloyd V. Jacquet, as editor, and Bill Everett, as art director and major creative contributor, must have been considerable.

MR LAHMANN EMPHATICALLY STATED

THAT HE REMEMBERED HAVING

***MARVEL COMICS #1* QUITE SOME TIME**

BEFORE THE MOVIE PREMIUM

Although it is apparent that the first Sub-Mariner story was meant to be an eight page introduction, a need to fill remaining pages in *Marvel Comics #1* was, not surprisingly, left to Mr. Everett. This apparently resulted in the addition of the four page sequence involving the attack on the Cape Anna lighthouse, and the introduction of Dorma, who became over the decades a long-standing character in the Sub-Mariner saga.

As for *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1*, I feel the research clearly indicates that it was a sample and solicitation to theater managers, to learn if they would purchase a cartoon book as a premium for their patrons. It would seem that Funnies Incorporated, a studio with a small budget, took previously-prepared line art, had it reprinted in cheap black and white format, wrapped it in a new color cover, and made an effort to publish a theater premium, in 1940, quite some time after the publication of *Marvel Comics #1*. It is known that only *Marvel Comics* #1 was officially copyrighted.

As for the artistic technique used by Bill Everett, a published interview with him clearly revealed that he used Craft Tint illustration board as a foundation for the color he expected to have superimposed by the printer, much as other artists "underpainted" tonal values in monochrome, before adding other colors. No intention for black and white publication was revealed.

After gathering the research and after evaluating all the available evidence, I am convinced that *Marvel Comics #1* is the first published appearance of Bill Everett's wonderful and historic creation. But whether CBM readers agree with these conclusions or not, I hope everyone will ask lots of questions and continue to research even "accepted" comic book history. As our four color pastime becomes more and more accepted as a mainstream hobby, the quality of our research will surely reflect the legitimacy of our hobby!

Warren Reece is a learned comicologist, writer, artist, and comic book collector for over two decades. Warren now resides in Florida.

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Autographed by Joe Shuster:Note that the autograph was done before Joe lost his sight(See Nemo #2) In this issue you'll find an excellent interview by Tom Andrae and Geoff Blum with Shuster as well as Jerry and Mrs. Siegel. I paid for that interview to happen all those years ago which lead to embarrassing warner/DC into giving the first money to Superman's(At the time destitute) creators.This is a prize momento for any advanced/novice collector.

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The New Adventures of Charlie Chan

A Scarce DC Gem of the 1950s

by Dr. Gerard Voland

Charlie Chan, Earl Derr Biggers' fictional police detective, has enjoyed commercial success in many different formats: Motion pictures (in particular, the very popular series of films in the 1930s and 1940s, starring, first Warner Oland, then Sidney Toler, and finally Roland Winters as the detective, radio, newspapers (as a cartoon adventure strip), television (as a late 1950's series starring J. Carroll Naish as Charlie), and, of course, comic books.

Charlie's appearances in comic books include:

- a series in *Feature Comics*, beginning in #23 (1939) and ending in #31 (1940), published by the Quality Comics Group;
- a relatively long-running series of newspaper strip reprints in *Big Shot Comics* (beginning in #1 (1940) through #78 (1947), published by the Columbia Comics Group;
- a one-shot appearance in *Mickey Finn #3* (1943), published by Eastern Color;
- *Columbia Comics #1*, published by the William H. Wise Company in 1944;
- his own title *Charlie Chan #1* (1948) through #5 (1949) with cover art by Simon and Kirby, published by Crestwood (Prize), followed by...
- after a six year interruption, #6 (1955) through #9 (1956), published by Charlton;
- a six-issue DC title (based upon the television show) entitled *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan,* published during 1958-1959, and finally
- a later Dell title, *Charlie Chan #1* (1965) through #2 (1966).

Many of these comic book appearances were either newspaper strip reprints or were heavily influenced by the depictions of Charlie and his sons both in the strip and in motion pictures.

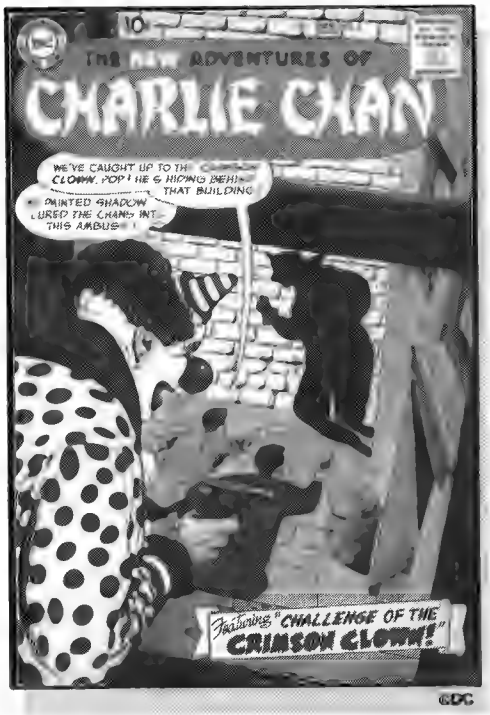
This article focuses upon DC's version of the Chinese-American detective from 1958-59. Although only six issues of *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan* were published, these issues rank among the finest of DC's many scarce gems of the 1950's.

The New Adventures of Charlie Chan premiered with the May-June, 1958 issue, without a *Showcase* tryout. *Showcase* was being used to introduce new concepts for DC titles at this time; however, since *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan* was based upon a current television show, it was immediately awarded its own title. It was probably felt that the television show provided any necessary preliminary exposure and name recognition for the title (in addition to the fact that Charlie Chan had been commercially popular for decades by 1958). Furthermore, any delay in publishing the title (via a *Showcase* tryout, for example) might adversely affect its success in the marketplace (particularly if the TV show was cancelled before the title itself could become established). Finally, DC may have had to agree to publish directly - without any "tryout" issues - a title based upon the television show in order to receive the publishing rights from the producers of the TV show. Other DC titles that were based upon television shows and that premiered directly in their own magazines without the benefit of *Showcase*-type tryouts include *Jackie Gleason And The Honeymooners* (1956), *Sergeant Bilko* (1957) and *The Many Loves Of Dobie Gillis* (1960).

Quality was immediately imbedded within the title with the superior artwork of Sid Greene and Gil Kane. Sid Greene is well-known to Silver Age fans for his memorable work on the

Star Rovers feature (and numerous other science fiction stories) in *Mystery In Space and Strange Adventures*; later, he inked many of the stories that appeared in *Batman, Justice League Of America, Flash*, and other Julius Schwartz-edited magazines of the 1960's. Gil Kane, of course, is one of the premier artists of the Silver Age, with absolutely stunning work in such DC titles as *Green Lantern, Atom, Showcase, Mystery In Space* and *Strange Adventures* (as well as many titles published by the Marvel Comics Group). Together, Greene and Kane provided *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan* with an exceptional artistic foundation.

The Greene/Kane artwork on this title featured a complementary blending of their individual styles, and included: interesting and expressive faces (a characteristic common to both artists' work), thoughtful page layouts, and meticulously detailed backgrounds of the (usually exotic) locales used in the storylines. (For example, some of these background panels used to describe Paris, with the Eiffel tower, ornate buildings, waterways, balconies, and so forth, and a small European village in the story entitled "The Monarch of Menace" in issue #5, are stunning in the level of detail that is used.)



I always admired the artistry of Greene and Kane in DC's science fiction titles, but their efforts for *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan* must be ranked among their very finest work.

The covers were generally of very high quality. Issue #1 featured one of the best covers of the run in terms of general interest, coloring and layout (with Charlie prominently featured in the foreground). Both #2 (in which a mummy is shown holding a gun and waiting to ambush the Chans) and #4 (with the Chans riding a roller coaster while a gunman shoots at them) are excellent with a superb use of color and self-explanatory without the use of word balloons. Issue #3 has a low-keyed science-fiction type of cover and #5 is once again intriguing to the reader by placing the Chans in what appears to be a very precarious trap. My favorite cover is that used for issue #6 in which Charlie and one of Canada's Royal Mounted Police are shown in a dogsled racing for safety while a gunman in a helicopter is firing upon them. The blades of the copter overlap the logo of the book - leading to an overall stunning cover.

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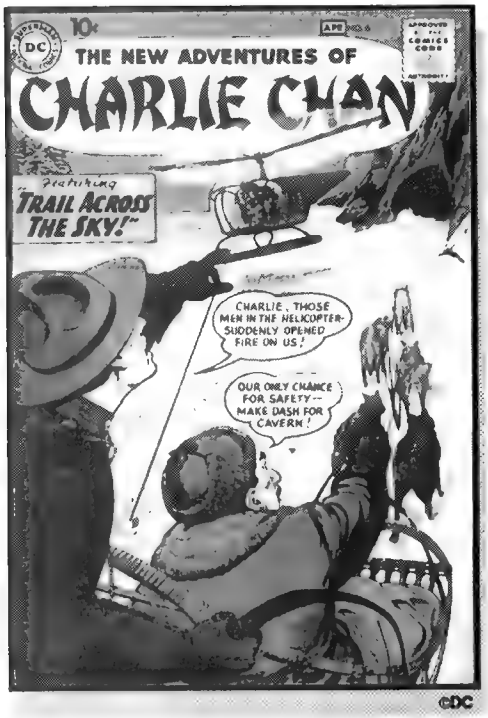
©DC

Each issue featured Charlie and his "Number One son" Barry (as opposed to his Number One son Lee, played so effectively by Keye Luke in motion pictures) in two stories. One would usually run about 16 pages in length while the other would be approximately 10 pages. Most DC comics in 1958 contained three short stories of 8 or 9 pages each; The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan was one of the early DC titles to feature two longer and more leisurely plotted stories.

Together with the participation of artists Greene and Kane, the format and style of *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan* strongly suggests that Julius Schwartz - DC's "Mr. Quality" - served as the editor for this title. Although I don't know if Mr. Schwartz was indeed editor, the use of two longer stories per issue was certainly a format found in many Schwartz-edited, single-theme titles of the 50s and early 60s, such as *Flash*, *Green Lantern*, *Atom*, and the Adam Strange tryouts in *Showcase*. The success of this format —both in creative terms and, I suspect, for budgetary and logistical reasons —led to its adoption in many other DC titles and (eventually) to the "novel-length" format of one story per issue that was later used by most publishers.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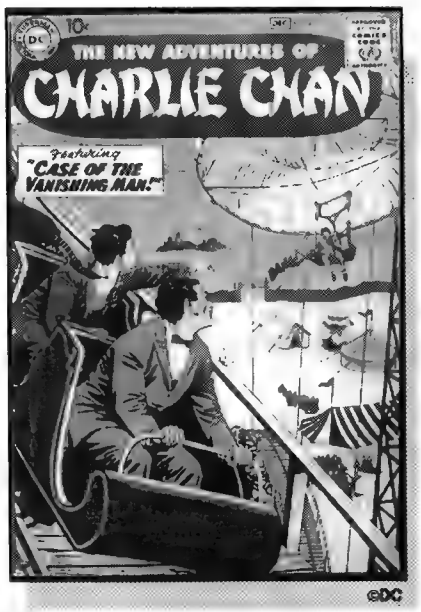


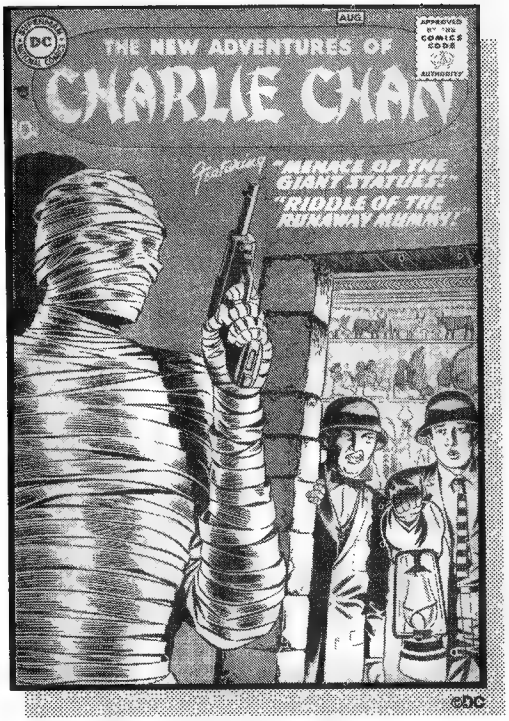
The storylines would generally begin with a mysterious event or disappearance; the Chans would then carefully gather clues (and suspects) until the solution to the puzzle would be found. Each story was like a "mini-movie" and used the extended page length to full advantage. (In fact, many of these stories were more entertaining and more carefully plotted than the Chan movies of the 1940's.) First, the characters and their relationships to one another - and the mystery itself - would be introduced; the Chans would then be placed in one or more dangerous situations from which to extricate themselves. Red herrings (false clues leading to incorrect solutions to the mystery) would appear. Finally, the actual solution would be presented, together with Charlie's deductions that had led to his logical explanation of the mystery. A simple judo blow would often be sufficient to quickly disarm and capture the suspect at the end of the story. Banter between the characters (in particular, between Charlie and Barry) would be included in the story, thereby adding a fuller contextual environment in which the storyline would unravel.

The two stories in issue #1 are examples of this format's effectiveness. In the first story, entitled "Secret of the Phantom Bells", the Chans are confronted with (a) a mysterious ringing of the tower bells in an English village, (b) a "phantom" Roman chariot driver, and (c) a treasure hidden somewhere within an old English manor. Flashbacks are used to explain how the treasure came to be hidden, and three other detectives are introduced. Charlie then correctly deduces the explanations for all of these mysteries, including the location of the treasure and the identity of the villain. In the second cover-featured story ("Charlie Chan's Invisible Clue"), Charlie is asked to identify which of three young men is the missing son of a maharajah in India. In addition, he must discover the culprit who is responsible for a series of jewel thefts.

This format continues in issue #2. "The Menace of the Giant Statues" found the Chans in Mexico investigating (and solving) two disappearances: that of a man and that of three carnival statues. In the second cover-featured story ("Riddle of the Runaway Mummy"), Charlie is on the trail of a notorious thief in Egypt (at the request of Interpol). Charlie not only catches the thief, but also exposes a scheme to swindle a museum director and captures the criminal syndicate that is behind this scheme.

In my opinion, the best story of the twelve that were published by DC was "Case of the Vanishing Man" in issue #4. Brothers Thomas and Martin Aldridge stop for the night at the Zenith Motel. Tom then goes to have dinner at a nearby restaurant while his brother Marty decides to turn in early at the motel. When Tom returns from the restaurant, he discovers that Marty has disappeared. Not only that, but there is no record that they had ever checked in at the motel, their automobile has vanished and the motel clerk denies that he had ever seen them before! Coincidentally (?), the Chans appear at this moment and Charlie agrees to investigate the mystery. Although one could argue that many other stories in the run were more complex and multifaceted with numerous suspects, this simple mystery story is extremely well written with a logical explanation for Marty Aldridge's disappearance. It is indeed a mystery that compares well to any of the Chan adventures in the movies.

All six issues of this title are quite scarce and very difficult to find in any condition (especially #5 and #6). They are memorable examples of the superb non-superhero DC comics that were published during the 1950s. *The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan* is a rare comic book gem in both its storylines and its artwork. ■



STORY CHECKLIST FOR
The New Adventures Of Charlie Chan

(** indicates the story featured on the cover)

Issue #1
(May-June 1958)
"Secret of the Phantom Bells"
(Locale: England)
"Charlie Chan's Invisible Clue" **
(Locale: India)

Issue #2
(July-August 1958)
"The Menace of the Giant Statues"
(Locale: Mexico)
"Riddle of the Runaway Mummy" **
(Locale: Egypt)

Issue #3
(September-October 1958)
"The Two Lives of Charlie Chan" **
(Locale: Florida)
"Secret of the Calypso Doll"
(Locale: Trinidad)

Issue #4
(November-December 1958)
"Case of the Vanishing Man" **
(Locale: fictional "Zenith City" somewhere in America)
"The Highwayman's Last Ride"
(Locale: New England)

Issue #5
(January-February 1959)
"The Monarch of Menace"
(Locales: Paris and the fictional republic of "Luxenstern")
"Challenge of the Crimson Clown" **
(Locale: New York City)

Issue #6
(March-April 1959)
"Trail Across the Sky" **
(Locale: Northern Canada)
"The Case of the Hillbilly Detective"
(Locale: Tennessee)

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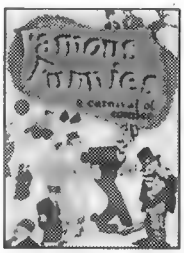
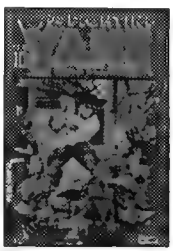
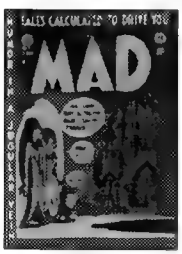


EAST Famous Funnies
A Carnival of Comics 1933
VFN/NM 70 (4.0) $6,000.00

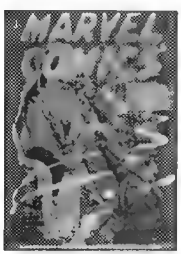
MVL Fantastic Four 1
Orig/1st App Fantastic Four
VG 25 (4.0) $1,000



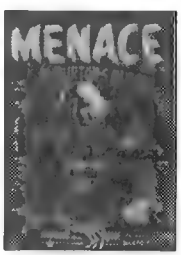
NEDOR Fighting Yank 10
Mile High / Schomburg-Cvr
M 92 (2.0) $500.00



EC Mad 1
White Mtn / White Pages
NM 75 (2.0) $2,000



TIM Marvel Comics 1
O.Sub-Mariner / Human Torch
VFN 60 (4.0) $39,950.00

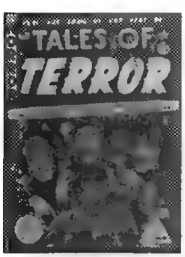


ATLAS Menace 2
White Mtn / White Pages
NM 88 (0.0) $500.00

DC Sensation Comics 1
Wonder Woman(cont ASC8)
VG 25 (4.5) $750

DC Superman 1
VG 20 (5.0) $9,000.00

MVL Tales of Suspense 39
Orig / 1st App Iron Man
VFN 55 (4.5) $1,800



EC Tales of Terror Annual 1
(Scarce) Pele[illegible]
VG 25 (4.5) $1,000.00 SOLD

EC Vault of Horror 14
Mile [illegible] Pages
NM 88 (4.0) $900.00 SOLD

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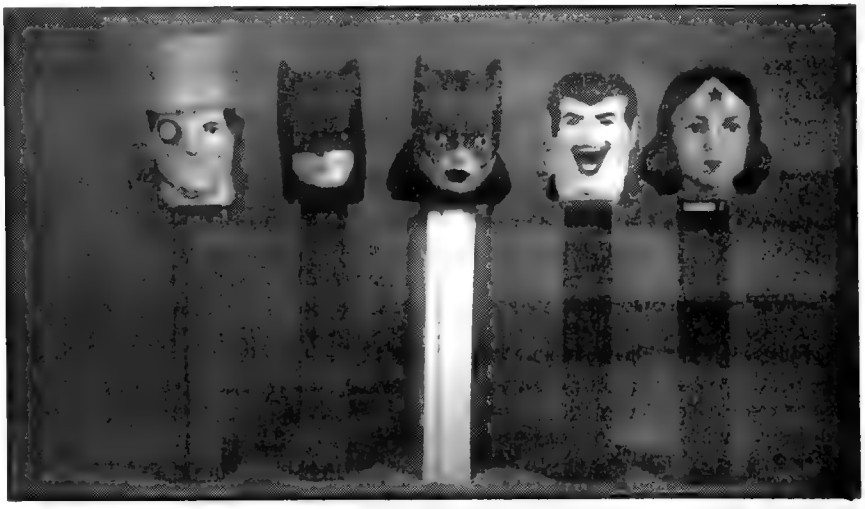
Comic Book Characters You Can Eat: PEZ !



by David Welch

PEZ collecting is a relatively new but immensely popular option for those who want an alternative to other, more established and often costly collectible fields. A new collector, for example, can obtain most of the known PEZ dispensers for under $100 each, and many for under $50! Considering the diversity of PEZ products, a very interesting and satisfying collection can be built for less than the cost of one Silver Age key-issue comic.

For comic book collectors in particular, PEZ offers many enticing items in its line of "Licensed Characters." There are different dispensers from many comic strips. Six from Peanuts, five from Garfield, five from Popeye, three from Asterix, three from Smurfs, and one from Little Orphan Annie. Cartoons are represented by Casper, Bozo, and Bullwinkle as well as a half-dozen different MGM characters, a dozen Warner Bros., and over two dozen from Disney.

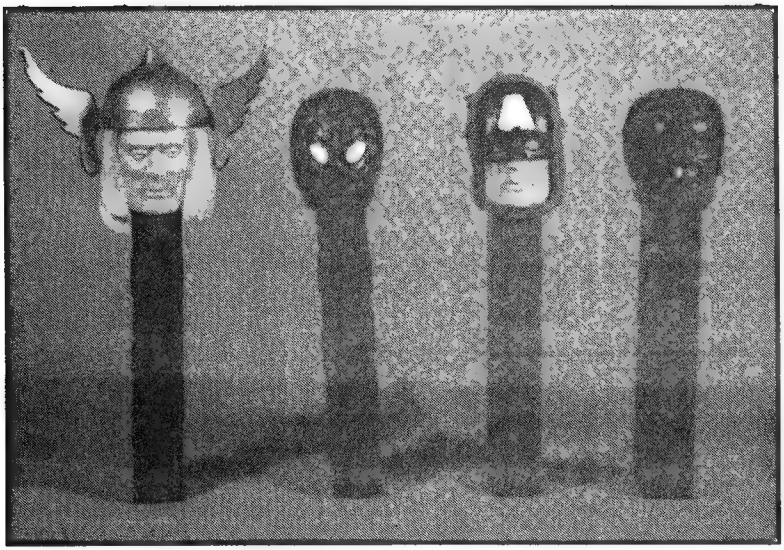
CBM readers will, no doubt, find superheroes of great interest with Marvel and DC being well represented. From Marvel, we have Thor, Spider-Man, Captain America, and Hulk. From DC, there are Wonder Woman, Batman (two versions), and a series of "soft heads" including Penguin, Batman, Batgirl, Joker, and Wonder Woman. The soft heads are identified by "Hong Kong" on the backs of their heads. Some heroes are conspicuous by their absence, most notably Superman, principally because their identities did not adapt well into the PEZ format.

The PEZ company, surprisingly, did not develop the dispenser format until two decades after the introduction of the candy itself. In 1927, Austrian Eduard Haas invented a candy for adults that he called PEZ (an abbreviation of the German word for peppermint; "pfefferminz"). World War II stopped production until the late 1940s when PEZ reappeared with its now-famous dispenser. PEZ came to the US in 1952 and by 1966 world-wide sales were reported at over 350 million dispensers! To date, approximately 240 different dispensers have been produced (excluding variations).

Finding variations of a given dispenser can make PEZ collecting seem like detective work. For the superheroes, variations are fairly obvious. The Hulk comes in two versions, the earlier of which has

PEZ "SOFT-HEAD" DISPENSORS FEATURING DC CHARACTERS (1978).
L to R Penguin, Batman, Batgirl, & Wonderwoman.
Value: $45-$75 each. ©DC

A guide to an untapped but fun (and delicious) segment of collectables



PEZ DISPENSERS FEATURING MARVEL CHARACTERS.
L to R Thor (1978-1980, $75-$125), Spider-Man (first issue, 1978-1985, $5-$15), Capt. America (1978-1985, $25-$50),and Hulk (first issue, 1978-1985, $15-$30)
©MEG

two color variations. Captain America has two color variations of his forehead piece. Spiderman comes with at least two eye variations. The Green Hornet can be found with two different hats and masks as well as at least two color variations. Batman without cape comes with a solid blue mask and cowl, a black mask and cowl, or a blue cowl with black mask. The real headaches come with a dispenser like Mickey Mouse which has had five distinctly different versions, the earliest two with virtually infinite subtle sub-variations.

A number of dispenser heads were produced but never released to the public, giving collectors even more heartaches.

The PEZ collectible market is one of the fastest growing of all the collectible hobbies and I know of no other nostalgia items that are of interest to so may collectors in other areas like PEZ items are. In my (and others') experience, PEZ items (regardless of the dispenser) currently generate a great deal of interest at shows and in ads. It even happens in spite of the fact that the PEZ items are often mixed in among more established collectibles such as wind-ups, premiums, model kits, comic books, and other toys! My experience has been that it is not unusual for dealers with PEZ items to easily sell every reasonably priced item in stock at a single show.

How does that translate into value? Among the superhero PEZ dispensers, the Green Hornet leads hands down in the $225-$350 range. Following close behind are Batman with cape (1960s, $100-$135), Thor ($75-$125), Captain America ($25-50), and Hulk (early version, $15-$30). The "Footless" Spiderman, Wonder Woman, and Batman can bring up to $15 each. The reduced value of these is attributable to the fact that all three are still produced with the stand-up tabs (or "feet") on the stems. The "Soft Heads" range from $45-$75 currently, but don't be surprised when they hit $100 each in 1993!

In the big picture, more and more, are sales which have surpassed the $500 mark in the past year. In a recent auction, $1000 was paid for a dispenser sought by two advanced collectors! Just more evidence that the recent growth in the PEZ market. Collectors whose previous or concurrent interests lie in robots, Lehmanns, cast iron, premiums, comic books, vintage marbles, advertising, or rare coins often express a similar sentiment. "How refreshing it is to find an interesting collectible where the high end tops out at a relatively affordable level. Further support of the growing market is evidenced by the fact that several leading premium experts have purchased PEZ items at the 1992 Atlan-tique City Show (for as much as $750).

The PEZ universe seems to be never-ending. The company even had a "premium club" for many years, leaving collectors puzzled about the number of non-dispenser giveaways, paper work, enclosures, and other PEZ ephemera. A number of dispenser heads were produced but never released to the public, giving collectors even more heartaches. These are rather like the "ashcans" of PEZ! But regardless of one's collecting orientation, the world of PEZ offers many fun, interesting, and fascinating treasures to collect. Maybe there's even something for you!

David Welch is a nationally recognized authority on PEZ collectibles and is author of the book "A Pictorial Guide to Plastic Candy Dispensers" which features PEZ items. Single copies are available for $22.95 postage paid from Bubba Scrubba Publications, PO Box 714, Murphysboro IL 62966. David's other collecting interests include cereal boxes, radio premiums, model kits, and Disneyana.

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The Many Hats Of A Comic Book Dealer

by Don Cook

I had a long conversation the other day with my good friend, Richie Muchin from *Tomorrow's Treasure's*. (If, by the way, you know Rich, you know it was a looooonnnnnngggggg.....conversation). We were talking about all the different things we have to do as dealers of Golden Age and Silver Age comics, both on the convention circuit and in mail order. It started out as a flight of fancy but it took on a more serious aspect as the list grew. Especially, we thought, if we had to pay all these people (jobs) individually. It ran thusly:

1. Advertising Dept: Every business needs to advertise. From business cards to ads in various publications.

2. Transportation: Gotta' get those books to the show, right?

3. Buyer: One of the most important jobs, of course, in the entire organization. The buyer can make or break the business.

4. Warehouseman (Shipping/Recieving): His job is to store the books after the buyer purchases them and transportation brings them to the warehouse.

5. Sorter: Somebody, of course, has to put all these books in order.

6. Grader: Another very important job is the grading of comics. It is one of the most debated and important issues in the industry. The company could rise or fall on the strength or weakness of its grader. (The best quality of a grader is objectivity.)

7. Pricer: This is the fellow who actually places a price on the individual issues "according to the market" ...with help from the Price Guide.

8. Packaging Dept.: There are different packages for different books, i.e., just bags, bags and backer boards, mylites, mylars, etc. The packager has to know his stuff, because I'd hate to find my *Batman* #11 in a plastic bag in the $2 box. Ha!

9. Marketer: This person has to figure out how each book can best be sold. For example, this one goes to a show, this one goes in a mail order ad, this one we'll sell to another dealer, this is on one of our want lists, etc.

10. Salesman: Different from the Marketer; this guy is out there in the trenches actually selling the books "hands on".

11. Accountant and Bookkeeper: Some one has to pay all the overhead and it's probably a good idea to keep track of how much you make, how much you spend, and don't forget taxes!

12. Janitor: That's right! Somebody has to clean up the debris that accumulates. I recently rebagged about a thousand comics (what a mess), a very important job.

13. Art Dept.: Someone to design the ads, the signs, the flyers, the business cards, etc.

14. Security Specialist: Very important. I know of a lot of friends who have material stolen at shows for lack of proper security. There are a number of ways to increase security, but that is another story.

15. Set-up and break-down guys (Roustabouts, to you carny types): We carry about 50 boxes to a show and it's nice to have a little help lifting and carrying all that merchandise, especially after a long and tiring show.

16. Architect and Designer: We build our own dollies to haul the books. We also make our own display boards and signs. The A&D department was called in to draw up the plans.

17. Assembler (Construction): Then, of course, someone had to put all these things together.

18. Manager: Oversees the comings and goings of the entire operation and handles most of the problems and situations that may arise. If he can't handle it, he then pays a visit to...

19. The Big Boss: 'NUFF SAID. (The buck stops here!)

If you thought being the owner/ proprietor of a comic shop would be a dream job— dream on!

As I stated afterwards, "Golly, Rich, 95% of these things I do myself. No wonder I'm so pooped."

A lot of times when I tell people what I do for a living, they look at me and say something like, "wow! I wish I had your job. What an easy life." Or, "Why don't you get a real job?" Well from now on I can pull out my copy of the CBM #21 and show them this list. There are likely some jobs we missed. If anybody has any input, please let us know. Thanks.

Oh yes, there's one more job... *Number 20. Writer!* ■

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When Crime Comics Were a Crime

A Look at the Law Against Crime Comic Books

BY PETER KLEE

Since comic books were first introduced as a new literary form in the mid-1930s, they have depicted stories involving the commission of crimes and the apprehension of criminals. Comic books devoted exclusively to crime stories began to flourish following World War II, when public interest shifted from foreign dictators to problems at home. However, not everyone was pleased with the proliferation of crime comic books. In the late 1940s, Dr. Fredric Wertham, a psychiatrist, began publishing articles warning parents and educators of the perilous effects of crime comic books on juveniles. According to Dr. Wertham, the graphic and sometimes lurid depiction of crimes in such books was inciting impressionable youngsters to engage in criminally delinquent behavior. Dr. Wertham's efforts, including his publication of Seduction of the Innocent in early 1954, sparked a national movement to eradicate these "evil" books. The movement led to senate hearings on the matter and culminated in the institution of the Comics Code Authority in early 1955.

In many areas of the country, the concern over crime comic books became more than just a social issue – it also developed into a legal issue. Elected officials, eager to impress constituents by campaigning against juvenile delinquency, enacted laws that made the sale and circulation of such books to minors a *criminal offense* punishable by both a fine and imprisonment. These laws were not only ill-conceived, but also inartfully drafted. In many cases, the sweeping breadth of the legislated prohibition applied not only to traditional "crime" comic books, but also to "super hero" and even "funny animal" publications.

Such a law was enacted in Los Angeles County, triggering a legal challenge that went all the way to the California Supreme Court. The decision rendered by the California Supreme Court in Katzev v. County of Los Angeles (1959, 52 Cal.2d 360) reaffirmed the constitutional protections afforded to comic book publishers, dealers, and purchasers. This article examines that landmark decision.

Los Angeles County Ordinance No. 6633 provided:

"The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles do ordain as follows:

Section 1. The Board of Supervisors finds that in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County: **a.** There is a great volume in the number and variety of crime "comic" books available to children under the age of eighteen (18) years. **b.** These crime "comic" books resemble closely other publications devoted in substance to humor. **c.** These crime "comic" books are placed for sale side by side with humorous publications. **d.** These crime "comic" books have been sold or circulated to children under eighteen (18) years of age. **e.** Many children have been incited to commit crimes as a consequence of looking at crime "comic" books. **f.** Many children have been incited to attempt the commitment of a crime as a consequence of looking at crime "comic" books. **g.** There is a clear and present danger which the Board of Supervisors finds is great and imminent that the continued sale and circulation in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County of crime "comic" books to children will incite said children to commit crimes or attempt to commit crimes and inculcate a preference in the minds of many of the children to participate in crime. **h.** The Board of Supervisors specifically finds that the prohibition against the sale to or circulation of crime

"comic" books to children is a reasonable measure to meet the clear and present danger hereinabove found.

Section 2. Every person is guilty of a misdemeanor who sells or circulates any crime "comic" book to any child under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Section 3. This ordinance shall not apply: **a.** To those accounts of crime which are part of the general dissemination of news. **b.** To those accounts of crime which appear in a newspaper of general circulation. **c.** To those accounts of crime which delineate actual historical events. **d.** To those accounts which delineate occurrences actually set forth in the sacred scriptures of any religion.

Section 4. As used in this ordinance, the following terms shall have the meaning given herein. When not inconsistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words in the plural number include the singular number, and words in the singular number include the plural number. **a.** Crime "comic" book: Any book, magazine, or pamphlet in which an account of crime is set forth by means of a series of five (5) or more drawings or photographs, in sequence, which are accompanied by either narrative writing or words represented as being spoken by a pictured character, whether such narrative or words appear in "balloons," captions or on or immediately adjacent to the photograph or drawing. **b.** In sequence: In direct order, excluding intervening breaks which continue the account, where such intervening breaks **(1)** contain narrative material, or **(2)** contain a drawing or photograph without words or narrative material. **c.** Crime: The commission or attempted commission of an act of arson, burglary, kidnapping, mayhem, murder, rape, robbery, theft, train-wrecking, or voluntary manslaughter; or the commission of an act of assault with caustic chemicals or assault with a deadly weapon. As the term "crime" is used in paragraph "a." of this section, it includes but is not limited to, acts by human beings, and further includes acts by animals or any non-human, part human, or imaginary beings, which if performed by a human would constitute any of the crimes named. **d.** Balloon: The outline enclosing words represented as coming from the mouth of a pictured character. **e.** Person: Any person, firm, association, organization, partnership, business trust, corporation, or company. **f.** Sells or circulates: To sell, offer for sale, attempt to sell, exhibit, give away, keep in possession with intent to sell or give away, or in any way furnish or attempt to furnish. **g.** Sacred scriptures: The Bible, including any version thereof, or any writing of similar stature in any established religion.

Section 5. Every violation of this ordinance shall be punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six (6) months or by a fine or [sic] not more than $500, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Section 6. If any provision of this ordinance, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance, and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

Section 7. Crime "comic" books are now being sold and circulated to children under the age of eighteen (18) years in the unincorporated territory of Los Angeles County, destroying their moral fiber and inciting them to crime and juvenile delinquency. Such damage, once accomplished, is irreparable. By reason of the foregoing, this ordinance is immediately needed for the preservation of the public health, safety, and welfare and shall take effect upon the passage hereof.

Section 8. This ordinance shall be published in Journal of Commerce and Independent Review, a newspaper printed and published in the County of Los Angeles."

Shortly after the ordinance was passed, a group of book and magazine dealers filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the ordinance. After losing at the trial court level, the dealers appealed. In 1959, the California Supreme Court heard the appeal and declared the ordinance unconstitutional based on four separate grounds.

First, the Court declared that the ordinance unjustifiably abridged the constitutional right of "freedom of speech." Under constitutional law, a legislative body (such as a board of supervisors) may forbid a publication only if there is a "clear and present danger" that the publication will "bring about a substantive evil that the legislative authority has a right to prevent." In analyzing the issue, the Court first confirmed that crime comic books are protected publications: "Publications containing criminal news, accounts of criminal deeds, or pictures and stories of bloodshed, lust, or crime are as much entitled to the protection of free speech as other literature." [Id. at 365.]

The Court then declared that, notwithstanding the Board of Supervisors' contrary opinion, there was insufficient evidence of a "clear and present danger" that crime comic books would incite juveniles to commit crimes: "The record in the present case fails to disclose a close, causal connection between the substantive evil—juvenile delinquency—and the circulation of crime comic books in general.... The record fails to show that there is a clear and present danger that the circulation of crime comic books in general will injure the character of persons under the age of 18 years and inculcate in them a preference for crime." [Id. at 367.]

Second, the Court determined that the ordinance's definition of a "crime comic book" was unconstitutionally overbroad in its scope: "The ordinance does not require that the drawings be lewd or depict brutality, sadism, gore or horror; nor does the ordinance limit its application to accounts of crime which glorify the crime or the criminal, make crime attractive or depict in detail the manner in which crimes are committed. The ordinance brings within its scope such publications as New Funnies (town attacked by bandits in Woody Woodpecker story); Bugs Bunny (Bugs steals diamonds); and Classic Comics (Treasure Island). Conversely, it is quite obvious that many crime, horror, or sex comic books containing the features most objectionable may continue unaffected by the ordinance because they are not fictional or do not contain accounts of the enumerated crimes".

"The failure of the ordinance to draw any distinction between various accounts of crime makes it unconstitutional. This overbroadness is well illustrated by the following: A parent or a dealer circulates a

comic book to a child. It is a Bugs Bunny comic in which buried somewhere deep in the book is an account of Bugs' stealing jewels from humans. The adult circulating the comic is guilty of a crime; intent on the part of the defendant is not a prerequisite. The adult cannot guard himself by merely glancing over the type of comic book he is circulating and relying on a well-founded assumption that the particular comic book is harmless for children".

"The distributors of such comic books will be forced either to stop selling all comic books or to read every page of every title they sell. Similarly, the parent, the barber, the dentist, and the doctor who allow children to read comic books will have to check every page to determine whether somewhere hidden innocuously away is the portrayal of a crime. The newsdealer could leaf through a comic book and quickly determine whether it falls under clear standards of the lurid, gruesome, or macabre, based upon the manner of depiction. However, under the present ordinance, his failure to check thoroughly each page might subject him to the chance of criminal liability." [Id. at 368.]

Third, the Court found the ordinance unconstitutional because it denied distributors "equal protection of the laws" by unreasonably exempting certain types of comic materials from its prohibition. The Constitution guaranties that laws will be applied equally to all people unless there is a reasonable basis for discrimination. The Court found that the ordinance unreasonably exempted criminal accounts that were true, religious, or appeared in newspapers (i.e., comic strips):

"No valid reason has been presented why comic books dealing in a disgustingly detailed way with the exploits of Murder, Incorporated, John Dillinger, or Jesse James will have any less harmful effect on children than Popeye, Tom Mix, or fictionalized accounts of the activities of law enforcement officials like G-men".

"The ordinance is invalid for drawing an irrational line between all true accounts of crime, even though disgustingly portrayed, and all fictional accounts of crime. The ordinance ignores the important factor which might support some comic book legislation, namely, the manner of depiction and the approach of the comic book. This same objection applies to the exclusion from the ordinance of all depictions of crimes which are culled from religious writings. This exemption has no justification when considered in the light of the purpose of the ordinance".

"Likewise, the exemption provided for newspaper comic strips is without justification. Although a newspaper would be perfectly free to circulate a fictional portrayal of crime, a comic which followed the frequent practice of reprinting newspaper comic strips would be banned. Unlike the exemptions for accounts of crime that are true or drawn from religious writings, this latter one is not based on content, nor is it a completely different form of presenting a story. Rather, the exemption is based solely on the nature of the product produced on paper." [Id. at 369-370.]

The fourth and final reason the Court found the ordinance to be unconstitutional was that it failed to establish a clearly defined standard of guilt. Under both the federal and state Constitutions, "no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law." What this means is that people are entitled to be reasonably informed of what the law commands or forbids them to do. A law which either forbids or requires the doing of an act in terms so vague that men of common intelligence must necessarily guess at its meaning and differ as to its application violates due process of law. The Court found that the ordinance failed to adequately define what constitutes a "crime comic book":

"There are on the market numerous children's books of fairy tales and folk tales, containing illustrations interspersed with dialogue or narration. If such portrayals are "in sequence" as defined by section 4b of the ordinance, they may fall within the prohibition of the ordinance. To outlaw these traditional and innocuous story books because of a desire to eliminate the seamy and gory in comic books is going far beyond any demonstrable need. Yet if such books are not within the ban, by what standard can a parent or newsdealer determine where to draw the line?" [Id. at 371.]

The Court also found that the ordinance failed to define what constituted an "account of crime":

"The exact term in the ordinance is "account of crime." Although the draftsman carefully spelled out which crimes he meant, we are not told what constitutes an "account." "Account" is defined in Webster's New International Dictionary (2d ed. 1957) as "a statement of facts or occurrences; a relation or narrative; report; description; as, an account of a battle." Suppose the crime is committed before the story opens, but a policeman reports to his superior the evidence he has found and the rest of the story is devoted to the chase. If this is an "account," all detective stories would be barred, even though they do not picture the criminal in the act of committing the crime, if there are five or more drawings or photographs in sequence, depicting the "account."

"Section 4a of the ordinance requires that the "account" of crime be set forth in five or more panels, but what does "account" include? If the criminal takes only one or two panels to kill his victim, although the entire story may deal with his subsequent detection, is this portrayal within the ordinance?

"These questions point up the ambiguity which leaves a distributor unable to determine whether comic books in his possession subject him to criminal liability." [Id. at 371.]

In addition, the Court found that the ordinance failed to adequately define what constitutes the "sale or circulation" of a crime comic book: "It is uncertain what acts constitute the crime prohibited by the ordinance. Clearly, the ordinance attempts to prohibit the selling of crime comic books to children, or offering or attempting to sell, giving, furnishing or exhibiting crime comic books to children. It is not clear, however, whether [dealers] are subjecting themselves to arrest for keeping crime comic books on their shelves for sale to adults. Assuming... that an exhibit of comics to adults is permitted under the ordinance, no clear provision is made to warn [dealers] when such an exhibit falls within the ban. Perhaps the distributor is in violation as soon as a child walks over to the rack and glances through a crime comic book. Under any circumstances, dealers in comic books should

continued on page 70

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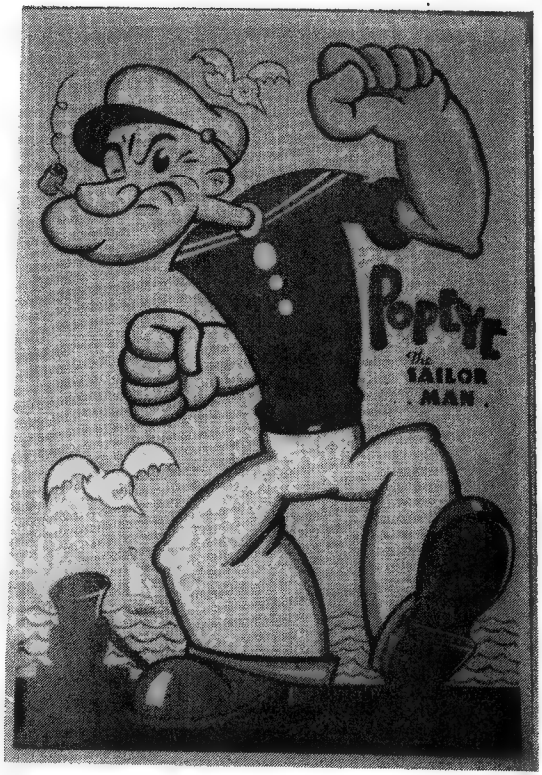
POPEYE

The Movie Poster Star

by Mark Wilson



Popeye, created and drawn by E.C. Segar, made his debut in a January 1929 Thimble Theater daily cartoon strip. It didn't take long for him to make an impact, because within a month the squinty eyed sailor with bulging forearms was Thimble Theaters leading character.

By 1933, his strip was so successful that Max and Dave Fleischer approached King Features Syndicates with the idea of making an animated Popeye cartoon. Though impressed with the idea, both Segar and King Features had a few concerns. If the cartoon was a flop would it hurt Popeye's image? Eventually, Max impressed them enough and won them over. But Segar himself wasn't so sure. He closely guarded his character during the entire story board and animation processes of the first cartoon.

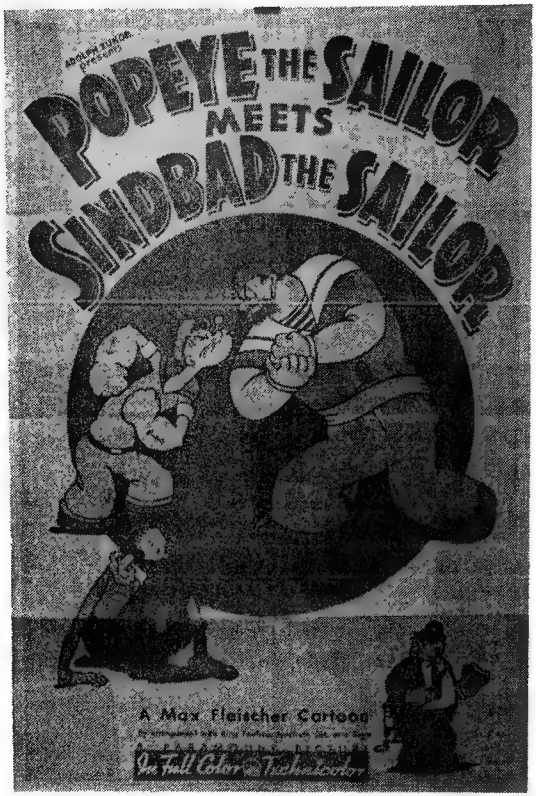
Popeye's 1st appearance in the movies was on 7/14/33, when he co-starred in a Betty Boop cartoon appropriately entitled "Popeye The Sailor". The cartoon was a huge success and Popeye literally stole the show.

The Betty Boop cameo established the world's most famous sailor man as a major box office attraction and was the first and last time Popeye co-starred with any character. Popeye went on to become Fleischer's biggest star, and by 1935 was voted the nations #1 cartoon box office draw (even ahead of Mickey Mouse). Oh, and spinach growers loved him too!

After the early success, Fleischer's came up with a bold and pioneering concept. Why not make a feature cartoon with Popeye? The public loved his seven minute cartoon shorts. Maybe they would really like eighteen full minutes of Popeye? Max believed in his idea, and on November 27, 1936 "Popeye The Sailor Meets Sinbad The Sailor" successfully made it's debut across the nation. This was the first of three full color Popeye features made by Fleischer Studios. The other two were "Popeye Meets Ali Babba & His Forty Thieves" (11/26/37), and "Aladdin And His Wonderful Lamp" (4/11/39).

A matter that needs clearing up at this point is the fact that many collectors and historians point to Walt Disney's "Snow White" as the first feature cartoon. This is simply not true. "Snow White" premiered on December 21, 1937; thirteen months after Popeye's "Sinbad" and one month after Popeye's "Ali Babba". Fleischer's Popeye should rightly be credited with the first two feature cartoons, while "Snow White" should be credited as the first full length feature cartoon.

Popeye cartoons continued successfully through 1942, when Fleischer Studios, in bad financial trouble, was forced to sell out to Paramount Pictures. Without the Fleischers at the helm, Popeye cartoons suffered. Paramount wouldn't provide the time or money needed to produce the quality cartoons the public was used to seeing. Even so, he remained a star and was a top box office draw for theater owners through the late 50s, when Television forced an end to the theatrical cartoon.



All total, there were a whopping 227 Popeye cartoons made between the years 1933 through 1957.

Popeye Animation Posters ("one sheets") are becoming a genuine Blue chip investment and are even collected by such notables as Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, & Leonard Maltin of "Entertainment Tonight". Although animation posters are quite a bit more expensive (and much more scarce) than his comic book appearances, there is currently a brisk market and they are highly prized by collectors. Prices range from a low of $150.00 for a 1950's duotone stock poster with a small image of Popeye, to a high of $25,000.00 for the 1934, 42" x 62", full color stock poster "Popeye The Sailor Man". His most valuable posters are from the Fleischer era, 1933-1942. Popeye posters, as well as many other animation posters, have seen tremendous price increases over the last ten years, many with an average yearly increase of 20 to 50%. It looks like this trend will likely continue, given the strong showing animation posters have had at auctions this past year. Happy collecting!

Mark Wilson is an advisor to the Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide, a nationally known comic book mail order dealer, and an avid appreciator of both vintage comic books and animation posters. If you would like further information about collecting animation posters, contact Mark at PO Box 340, Castle Rock, WA 98611.

PREVIOUS PAGE:
Extremely rare – large full color stock poster, 42"x62", 1934.
Estimated value = $25,000.
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ABOVE:
The famous & rare full color stone lithograph poster of "Popeye Meets Sindad", 27"x41", 1936.
Estimated value = $10-15,000
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RIGHT:
A scarce full color window card, 14"x22", 1937.
Estimated value = $2,500-$3,500
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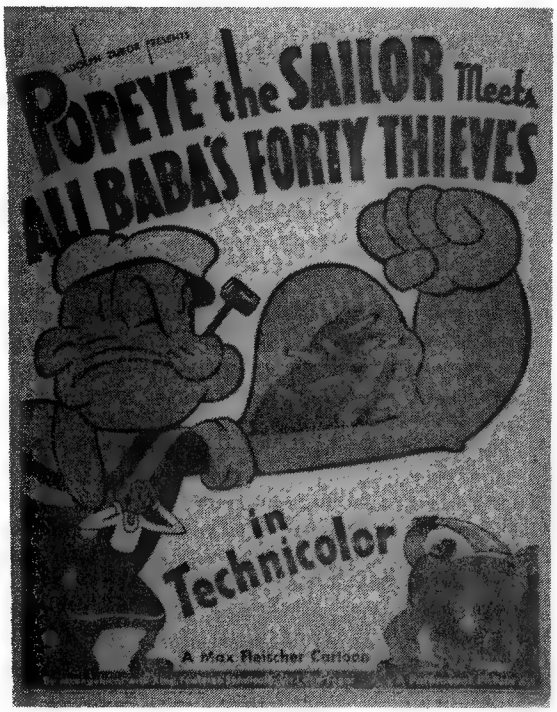

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Vintage "premium" comic books are rare and special things. Unlike regular comic books, they were not published in huge print orders for nation-wide distribution to newsstands, nor sold in supermarkets, candy stores, or novelty shops. Instead, "premium" comic boooks (i.e. comic books that were created to be premiums) were printed in limited numbers as promotional prizes and giveaways. They were usually obtained through special radio offers and mail-order opportunities. They were often found as unusual bonus items in movie theaters, as prizes in cereal boxes, and as that "little something extra for the kids" in department stores and shoe shops. As a result of this "restricted" distribution and limited availability, a great many premium comic books (especially from the '30s,'40s, and '50s) are turning out to be some of the rarest and most collectible comic books of all.

According to John Snyder, nationally known premiums authority and advisor to both the *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* and *Price Guide Companion*, the prices of premium comics (especially the rare books pictured in the photo above) have shown significant price gains during the past year. This, plus the fact that the comic book and related collectibles market has never been stronger, also signals an increase in demand.

Like premium rings, buttons, pins, cards, etc., premium comic books have recently become high priority items on the want lists of many well known collectors. If supplies continue to dwindle, it seems likely that prices

PREMIUM COMIC BOOKS *continued from page 69*

will continue to climb! Shown left to right, from top: Lassie Red Heart Dog Food giveaway (1949), sold— $150; Terry and the Pirates radio premium (1941, rare), guides— $600; Near perfect copy of Captain Marvel Adventures #20 with original miniature comic book giveaway still attached to cover (1942, extremely rare), guide— $1200; Lone Ranger mail-order ice cream comic (1939), guide—$1500; Superman's Christmas Adventure Macy's giveaway (1940), guide—$1500; Mickey Mouse Christmas shoe store giveaway (1939), guide—$500; Captain Marvel Special Edition Comics theater giveaway (1940), guide—$4000; Buster Brown comic book giveaway (1940), guide—$200; Red Ryder Victory Patrol comic with decoder and membership card (1940), guide—$1200; Red Falcon #1 & #2 giveaway inserts under ice cream lids (1937), sold—$600 the pair, Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Book (1904), guide—$1200; Superman Sugar Smack cereal giveaway (1955), guide—$300; Theatre Comics (1946), sold—$900; and March of Comics #4 (1947), guide—$5000. ■

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CRIME COMICS *continued from page 63*

not be required to hazard assumptions and guesses as to the meaning of the ordinance." [Id. at 371-372.]

Finally, the Court found that the ordinance failed to adequately define the circumstances under which an act would constitute a "crime": "Section 4c of the ordinance says that a crime comic includes depiction of "acts by human beings, and further includes acts by animals or any nonhuman, part human, or imaginary beings, which if performed by a human would constitute any of the crimes named." Comic books characters are frequently portrayed as human, except for some insignificant animal features, such as big ears, or a victim may be imaginary although close to human form because he is the inhabitant of another planet. The problem thus arises, when does an animal commit a crime on a human? If the ordinance is taken literally, every time an animal acts toward a human in a way that would constitute a crime of the animal were human, the portrayal comes under the ordinance. This "as if" test would make an "account of crime" out of a person's losing an arm to a shark, since if the shark were human its act would constitute cannibalism or mayhem, or to a dog's eating some food found on a person's porch, since if the dog were human its act would constitute theft." [Id. at 372.]

Having declared the ordinance unconstitutional, the California Supreme Court reversed the trial court's ruling and entered judgment in favor of the dealers. Ordinance No. 6633 was erased from Los Angeles County's law books, and no efforts were made to replace it with an improved version.

The dealers had won. However, in certain respects, their victory was a hollow one. By the time the Katzev decision was rendered in 1959, Dr. Wertham's handiwork had taken its toll.

Crime comic books no longer existed, and those comic books that were being published in 1959 were written and drawn in compliance with the squeaky clean requirements of the Comics Code Authority.

The decision did, however, provide a critically important judicial precedent that helped protect future generations of comic book publishers, dealers and buyers. The constitutional hurdles imposed by Katzev effectively deterred subsequent efforts to regulate the content of comic books. Obvious beneficiaries include the "underground comics" industry (which first sprang to life in San Francisco in the 1960s), as well as several of today's independent publishers, whose books depict violence at least as graphically as the books that were eradicated in the 1950s. Katzev embodies the judiciary's critical role in safeguarding fundamental constitutional rights from those who would seek to impose their own views on the community at large.

Peter H. Klee is an avid comic book fan/collector and an attorney who specializes in civil litigation. Mr. Klee is a partner in the law firm of Luce, Forward, Hamilton, & Scripps in San Diego, California. *We would like to thank Peter for his excellent research and for taking time out from his busy practice to write for CBM.*

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BAFFLING MYSTERIES
5 VG-F 32.00
7 F 36.25
8 F + ... 27.50
8 G-VG 15.00
8 FR 5.00
BARNEY & BETTY (FLINTSTONES)
5 (.20 cnt) VG F 3.50
BARNEY BEAR
1977, 1979 VF-NM 3.00
BARNEY GOOGLE & SNUFFY SMITH (CHARLTON)
1 (.20 cnt) F 28.00
2 VF + ... 26.75
4 VF-NM 35.00
BATTLE
8 (.10 cnt) VG 7.50
61 G 2.75
BATTLE ACTION
23 G 2.75
BATTLE ATTACK
3 FR 5.25
5 G 2.25
BATTLE BRADY
12 G 3.75
BATTLE HEROES (1968 STANLEY)
1 (.25 cnt SB GT) VF 8.50
1 F + ... 6.25
1 VG-F 4.25
1 VG 3.75
2 F + ... 4.25
2 G 3.75
3 VG-F 4.25
BATTLE OF THE PLANETS
3, 4 (.40 cnt) VF-NM 6.50
BATTLEFIELD ACTION
48 (.12 cnt) VF-NM 7.00
BATTLEFRONT
32 (.10 cnt) VF 3.75
BEAGLE BOYS
2 (.12 cnt) VG-F 4.00
BEETLE BAILEY
22, 25 (.10 cnt) VF 4.25
48 (.12 cnt) VF-NM 3.00
BEST OF HEROES THE MERACE
4, 13 (.25 cnt Gant) VG 1.75
BEYOND
6 VF- 29.00
7 VF-NM 26.00
14 F + ... 17.75
BILLY & BUGSY BEAR (TV)
7 (.10 cnt) VG-F 4.25
BILLY THE KID (1957-1984 CH)
29, 39 VG 5.25
29, 31 FR 2.50
30 VF 6.00
30 FR- 2.25
31, 32 VG 3.75
31, 32 FR 2.50
32 G 2.75
58 (12 cnt) VG-F 3.75
66, 69 VF-NM 7.50
67, 69 VG 3.00
71 G 2.25
72 F- 3.50
88, 91, 95 (.20 cnt) VF 4.00
89, 90 VF-NM 3.50
91 VG 1.50
91 VG- 1.75
97 VF- 2.75
98, 100 VF-NM 3.50
BILLY THE KID (1970 CHARLTON)
98, 99, 100 VF 3.00
101, 102, 103 VF-NM 3.50
102 F 1.75
102 VG 1.50
106 VF-NM 3.00
108, 110, 111 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 3.00
113, 116, 117 F 1.50
114 F + ... 2.00
115, 117 VF 2.75
116 VG-F 1.50
119 (.30 cnt) F- 2.25
119, 121 VF 2.75
120, 121 F 1.50
124, 125 (All Sawron) (.35 cnt) VF 3.00
126, 127 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 3.00
130 (.40 cnt) VF 1.75
136 (.30 cnt) VF + ... 2.50
139 (.50 cnt) VF 3.00
144 VF + ... 2.00
146, 149, 151 (.60 cnt) VF 1.75
148, 150, 152 VF-NM 2.00
BIRDY
81 (.15 cnt) F + ... 3.00
BLACK FURY
43 (.12 cnt) VG-F 3.00
55 VG 2.75
BLACK MAGIC
V 2 # 3 G 4.00
V 2 # 5 G 5.25
V 3 # 3 G 4.50
V 4 # 6 G 4.00
BLAZING SCOURGE (1964 SUPER/TW)
1 Avon Reprints (.10 cnt) VF-NM 3.50
1 VF 8.25
1 (6.0 cnt) VF-NM 5.50
8 F-VF 6.25
8 VG-F 4.25
8 VG 3.75
9 G 2.75
16 (.12 cnt) F 3.50
16 F 3.50
BLONDIE
178, 180 VF-NM 2.00
214, 215, 217 (.25 cnt) VF + ... 4.00
BLUE BEETLE (CHARLTON - 1964/1980)
V 2 # 2 3 4 VG 9.50
V 2 # 4 5 F 12.50
V 3 # 3 50 F 12.50
V 3 #51 VF-NM 15.00
BLUE BEETLE (CHARLTON - 1967)
2 (.10 cnt) F, 2 (.25 cnt) G (Ditko) VF-NM 18.00
5 (Ditko) VF 14.50
5 (Ditko) G 10.00
6 (Ditko) VG 6.75
BOB SON OF BATTLE
FC 729 (.10 cnt) VG 5.25
BOBBY KENNEDY (1963-1980)
3 (.12 cnt) VF 10.25
3 F 6.50
6 F 6.00
7 F-VF 8.00
9 Wally Wood (.12 cnt) VF 10.25
9 (.12 cnt) F 6.50
12 Torres, MC Williams, Orlando (.12 cnt) VF 10.25
14 (.12 cnt) VF 8.00
15 Crandall Evans (.12 cnt) F-VF 5.00
15 (.12 cnt) F 3.75
16, 17, 18, 19, 20 VF 6.50
16, 18 VG-F 3.25
18, 19 F 3.50
19 VG-F 3.00
21 F-VF 5.00
21 F 5.00
22 F, 22 VF 4.00
24, 25 (.15 cnt) VG 2.00
25 VG-F 2.25
26 VG-F 2.25
27 F 2.50
27, 29 F 2.50
31, 33 VG-F 2.25
31, 32, 38, 42 F 2.50
32 VG + ... 2.00
33, 36 VF 4.00
35, 41, 42 VF 4.00
38, 40, 46 F + ... 3.00
40 VG-F 2.00
47 (.20 cnt) VF 2.75
48, 50 F 1.75
50 VG-F 1.50
50 VG 1.50
51, 52 VF 3.00
53 VF-NM 3.00
54, 55, 60, 62, 69 (.25 cnt) VF 2.25
56, 57, 59 VF 2.25
58 F + ... 1.50
58 (.20 cnt) F 1.75
70 (.30 cnt) VG 1.50
72 VF 2.25
73 F 1.50
BORIS KARLOFF THRILLER
1 (.25 cnt) F + ... 15.50
2 VF 19.25
BRAIN BOY
2 (.12 cnt) G 5.25
3 VF 17.00
3, 4, 5 VG-F 9.00
3, 4, 5, 6 VG 8.00
4 G + (LG) 4.75
BRAVADOS
1 (.25 cnt SB GT) VG-F 3.75
BUCCANEER (TW)
8 (.10 cnt) VF 10.25
12 (.12 cnt) F 4.00
BUFFALO BIG
FC 957 (.10 cnt) VG 15.00
BUFFALOS
1 (.15 cnt) VG-F 4.25
BUGS BUNNY
FC 289 (.10 cnt) FR 7.00
FC 317 VG- 12.25
FC 317 F 8.75
FC 317 (.pl.) FR 6.25
FC 327 G 8.75
FC 327, 338, 347 VG-F 15.00
FC 338, 347 F- 12.50
FC 347, 355 VG 12.25
FC 355 G 8.75
33 VG 4.00
35 F 4.50
35 VF-NM 12.00
35 G 3.50
41, 44, 49, 50 G 2.75
44, 49, 50 VG 3.75
51, 57 VG 3.75
51, 60 F 2.75
56 VG-F 4.25
56 VG 3.75
62, 67, 58, 59 G 2.75
64, 66, 68 VG 3.75
68 VG-F 4.25
68, 69 VG-F 4.25
74 VG-F 4.25
74 F 2.50
86 Showtime (.25 cnt SB GT) VF 3.50
113 (.12 cnt) VG-F 3.00
122 (.15 cnt) F 2.50
144, 145, 149 VG-F 2.25
209 (.40 cnt) VF + ... 2.50
BUGS BUNNY ALBUM
VF-NM 3.00
1 VF 8.25
1 (6.0 cnt) VF-NM 5.50
8 F-VF 6.25
8 VG-F 4.25
8 VG 3.75
9 G 2.75
16 (.12 cnt) F 3.50
16 F 3.50
BUGS BUNNY CHRISTMAS FUNNIES
5 (.25 cnt SB GT) VG 3.75
BUGS BUNNY VACATION FUNNIES
1 VG + ... 30.00
BUZZY
66, 73 (.10 cnt) G 2.75
CANDY
9 PR 2.00
18 FR 1.50
42, 35 FR 1.50
42 FR 1.75
CAPT. MARVEL PRESENTS THE TERRIBLE (SHYWALD)
1 (.25 cnt SB GT) VG-G 5.50
CAPT. ATOM
See Also, Strange Suspense Stories
79 (.12 cnt) VF-NM (SC) 12.50
79 VG-F 10.75
79 VG- 9.75
79 F 20.00
79, 80 F 12.50
79, 80 VG 9.50
80 VF 25.00
80 F + ... 23.75
80 F 13.75
80 F +, (LS) 10.50
80 VG-F (LS) 8.00
80 VG (LS) 7.25
80 G 6.25
82 VG 12.50
82 F 11.25
84 VG 7.50
87, 88 F 10.00
88 VG- 7.00
CAPTAIN ATOM (MODERN COMICS REPRINT)
82 (.25 cnt) NM 1.50
CAPTAIN JET
2 (1.00 cnt) FR + ... 8.00
CARL LINK ADVENTURES IN SORCERY
3 F 1.50
4 (.20 cnt) VF-NM 3.50
CHIP N DALE (1967)
25, 26 VF 3.00
27 VF-NM 3.50
CINDERELLA
FC 272 G 10.00
COMIC ALBUM
6 (Bugs) (.10 cnt) VF-NM 14.00
6 (Bugs) F- 6.50
6 (Bugs) VG 5.25
6 (Bugs) G 4.00
7 (Porky) VG 5.00
10 (Bugs) F- 9.00
11 (Popeye) FR 2.50
COMICS ON PARADE
57 FR 6.75
60 FR 6.75
64 FR 6.50
COMICS READING LIBRARY
R-08 (Prince Valiant) 5.00
V-NM (LS) 18.00
DAFFY DICK
6 (.10 cnt) VG 4.50
7, 11 G 3.00
7 G + ... 3.75
7 G- 3.50
8 FR-G 2.50
11 G- 3.00
DAFFY DICK
12, 16, 17, 18, 19 G 2.75
14, 18, 19, 21, 22 FR-F 2.00
21, 22 G 2.75
47 (.12 cnt) VF 6.00
51 VG-F 3.00
52 (15 cnt) cvr versions (.15 cnt) F 2.50
63 VF-NM 5.00
77 VF 4.00
80 F 2.50
100 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 5.00
104, 105 (.30 cnt) VF-NM 2.50
DAISY DUCK'S DIARY
FC 948 VF 12.00
FC 948 VG 5.25
DARING ADVENTURES (1963-1964 SUPER)
12 Phantoms Lady Fox reprints (.12 cnt) VF-NM 65.00
12 VF 52.00
12 F 29.25
12 VG 22.75
15 VF-NM 40.00
15 VG 15.00
15 VG 15.00
DAISY JONES
FC 598 (.10 cnt) VG-F 6.00
FC 598 VG 5.25
DELL GIANT
38 VF-NM 40.00
49 VF-NM 35.00
DENNIS THE MENACE
49, 50, 51, 52 (.10 cnt) F 2.75
DENNIS THE MENACE & MR. WILSON
20 (.25 cnt) VG-F 2.75
DENNIS, DOG DUGAN
1 (.10 cnt) FR 5.00
DICK TRACY
73 G 15.00
119 F 22.50
119 VG-F 19.25
119 VG 15.75
119 G 11.25
DOCTOR ROBBS
FC 212 FR 3.25
DOCTOR SOLAR
5 (.12 cnt) F + ... 10.00
10 F 9.00
12, 14 F 12.00
19 VG-F 6.50
DONALD DUCK
30 G 8.75
33, 35 VG- 7.75
34, 35 VG 8.25
43, 48, 50 VG 6.00
57 VG 4.50
60 (Barks) (.10 cnt) F 22.50
64 VG 7.50
68 VF-NM 26.00
70 VF-NM 10.00
70 F 5.00
70 VG 3.75
70 G 3.25
141 (.15 cnt) F 2.50
156 (.20 cnt) VF-NM 5.00
154 VF 4.25
156 VF-NM 3.50
DOOMSDAY + 1
1 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 6.00
2, 6 VF-NM 4.50
DOUBLE DARE ADVENTURES
1 Simon & Kirby B Man (.25 cnt SB GT) F 11.00
1 G-VG 11.00
DOUBLE TROUBLE (ST. JOHN)
1 (.10 cnt) FR 3.00
DRAG STRIP HOT ROODERS (1963-1967 CH)
1 VF-NM 25.00
DREAM OF LOVE (TW)
1 VF-NM 3.50
1 F-VF 6.25
1 F, VF 4.75
DYNAMIC (TW)
1 VF-NM 9.50
EERIE (TW)
8 F 4.75
8 VG-F 4.25
8 VG 3.75
EMERGENCY DOCTOR
1 (.12 cnt) F 3.50
1 VG 2.75
FANTASTIC GIANTS
24 (Ditko) (.25 cnt Giant) VG 19.25
24 (Ditko) VG 9.00
FANTASTIC TALES (TW)
1 (.10 cnt) F-VF 6.50
1 F 5.00
1 VG-F 4.00
1 G-VG 3.25
1 (1958?) Rapp Avon "City of Living Dead" (.10 cnt) VF-NM 10.00
FANTASTIC VOYAGES OF SINBAD
1 VG- 11.75
1 VG 6.00
1 F, F + ... 8.00
2 VF 13.00
FAST WILLIE JACKSON
1 (30 cnt) VF + ... 4.75
1 F 2.50
2, 3 VF 3.00
FAT ALBERT & THE COSBY KIDS
29 (.20 cnt) VF + ... 3.50
FIGHT THE ENEMY
1 (.25 cnt SB GT) VF-NM 14.00
1 VF 12.00
1 F + ... 7.00
1 F 6.00
1 Boris Vallejo, AL MC Williams (.25 cnt SB GT) VF-NM 17.50
2 (.25 cnt SB GT) VF 10.25
2 VF- 14.00
2 F 8.75
2 VG 6.75
3 MC Williams, Ruben Wood (1/2 page) (.25 cnt SB GT) VF-NM 12.00
3 (.25 cnt SB GT) VF 10.25
3 VF- 9.50
3 F 5.50
3 VG 4.50
FIGHTING MARINES (1951-1964)
56 (.12 cnt) VF 6.50
56, 61, 72, 78, 79 VG-F 3.25
66, 75, 80 VG 3.00
68, 84 F- 3.50
71, 81, 86 F 3.75
77 F + ... 4.50
81, 82, 83 VG-F 3.25
83 F, 86 (.15 cnt) F 4.25
93 F + ... 4.50
93 VG 4.00
99 VF 4.00
100, 102, 111 (.20 cnt) VG 2.00
101, 102, 106 F 2.00
103, 105, 109 VG-F 2.00
102, 107, 110 VF 3.25
103, 104, 108, 109 F 2.50
103, 105, 108, 111 F 2.00
104, 105, 107, 108 VG 4.00
107, 108, 110 VG-F 3.75
110, 111, 112 VF-NM 4.00
117, 122, 125, 127 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 4.00
124, 127, 128 VF 3.50
125, 130, 131, 132, 132 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 3.00
132 (.20 cnt) VF 2.25
FIGHTING NAVY
103, 110 (.10 cnt) F 3.00
FIGHTING AMERICAN
7 ..... 7.00
FIGHTING DANIEL BOONE (Chandler C/A) VF-NM 65.00
FLASH GORDON (1966-1982)
1 VF 16.00
1 F 10.00
1 VG 8.00
1 VG- 10.00
1 G 9.00
1 G- 7.50
1 FR-G 5.00
2 (12 cnt) F 5.00
2 VG 3.75
3 Williamson cover (12 cnt) VF-NM 12.00
3 (12 cnt) VF 10.25
3 VF- 9.50
3 F 6.50
3 F- 5.50
3 VG 4.50
12 VG 4.50
17 (.15 cnt) VF 3.50
FLY MAN
31, 33, 34, 35 VG-F 9.50
31, 35, 39 VG 8.25
34, 36, 37 F 11.00
32, 33, 34, 36, 37 VF 17.75
33, 34, 35, 36, 37 VF-NM 22.00
34, 38 F 6.50
37 VG 5.75
37 VG + ... 5.75
FLYING CADET
4, 6, 8 F 4.25
FORBIDDEN WORLDS
4 (.20 cnt) F 42.00
87, 88, 89 (.10 cnt) F 3.25
90 VG 9.25
91, 92, 93 FR 2.25
95 FR 4.50
96 FR 2.50
98, 99 FR 2.25
124 (.12 cnt) F 5.00
125, 126 F 4.25
127, 129 VF 7.75
127, 129 F 4.25
128 VG 3.50
129 VG 3.50
130 VG 4.00
131 F 4.00
131, 134, 135, 141 F + ... 3.00
131, 135, 141 VG 3.00
134 VF-NM 8.00
134, 135, 138 VG-F 3.50
140 Mark Midnight by Ditko (.12 cnt) VG-F 5.00
140 (.12 cnt) VG 4.50
142 VF 7.00
142, 144, 145 F 4.00
142, 144, 148 VF-G 3.25
143, 144, 145, 148 F 3.00
FOXHOLE (SUPER)
15 VG 2.75
17, 18 VG-F 3.00
FRANKENSTEIN (DELL)
1 (1st prt) F 6.50
1 (1st prt) VG 4.50
1 (1st print) G 3.50
1 (1st print) FR 2.25
1 (2nd print) VG 4.50
2, 3 (2nd print) F 6.00
2 VF 6.00
FREDDY (CHARLTON)
24, 27, 32, 33, 35 (10 cnt) F 4.75
27 VG 3.75
30 VG + ... 3.75
37 VF-NM 9.50
FREEDOM AGENT
1 (.12 cnt) VF-NM 8.00
1 F + ... 4.00
1 F 3.00
FROGMEN
3 F 17.50
4 F + ... 8.50
4 F 8.00
4 FR-G 3.00
4, 6, 10 VG 4.25
4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 G 4.00
4, 7, 8, 10 F 7.00
6 F- 5.50
7 VG 5.00
9 VG (LS) 4.00
FUNNY PHANTOM
3 (.15 cnt) VF-NM 5.00
GARRISON'S GORILLAS
2 F 6.00
GASP
1 (.12 cnt) VG 5.75
1 F, VF 9.00
2, 3 VF 7.75
2, 3 F 4.50
2, 3, 4 VG-F 4.00
2, 3, 4 VG 3.50
3, 4 VG 3.50
7, 8, 9 VF 4.25
GERONIMO JONES
1 (.15 cnt) VF-NM 5.00
2, 4 VF-NM 4.00
6 F + ... 3.00
6 F 2.75
7, 8, 9 VF 4.25
GHOST MANOR (1971-1984)
1 (.20 cnt) VF 4.25
1 F + ... 3.00
1 F 2.50
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 VF-NM 3.50
2, 3, 4, 5, 7 VF 3.00
2, 5, 6 VG + ... 2.50
2, 3, 4 VG 2.25
3, 6 F + ... 2.25
4 (Ditko) F + ... 2.25
4 F 2.25
9, 11, 12, 16, 17 VF-NM 3.50
9, 11, 13, 15 F 2.75
9, 11, 15, 17 F + ... 2.25
9, 11, 15, 17 VG 2.00
10 (Wood, Ditko) F + ... 2.75
10 (Wood, Ditko) F 2.50
10 (Wood, Ditko) VF-NM 3.00
10 (Wood, Ditko) VG 2.00
10 (Wood, Ditko) VF 3.00
12 VG + ... 1.50
13, 14, 15, 16 VF 2.75
14 VF- 2.75
15 G 1.50
16 (.25 cnt) F + ... 1.75
19 Blue Beetle, Capt. Adam; C. Man Cameos (.20 cnt) VF-NM 2.50
19 (C-Man Cameo) (.20 cnt) F 2.00
21 (C-Man Cameo) F 2.00
22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 (.25 cnt) VF-NM 2.75
23 (.30 cnt) VG-F 1.50
24, 25, 26, 27 VF 2.50
29 (.30 cnt) VF-NM 2.50
30 (.30 cnt) VF 2.25
30 F 1.50
33 (.35 cnt) F + ... 1.50
34 VG 1.50
36 VG 1.50
37 (Ditko K) VG-F 1.50
37 VG 1.50
41 VG-F 1.50
41 VG 1.50
46 VF-NM 2.50
46 (.40 cnt) VG 1.50
48 VG 1.50
49 VG-F 1.50
50 VG 1.50
53 F 1.50
53 (.50 cnt) VF-NM 2.00
57 Wood/Ditko/Howard (.50 cnt) VF 3.50
58 (.50 cnt) F + ... 2.50
GHOST STORIES (1962-1973)
19 F + ... 7.50
21, 22, 24, 26, 30 Ripsaw plots (.15 cnt) VF 6.00
23 (.15 cnt) F 2.50
28 F 3.00
30, 32, 33, 34 VF 2.25
36 (.20 cnt) VF 3.50
37 F 2.00
GHOSTLY HAUNTS (1971-1978)
23, 24, 27, 28, 29 F + ... 1.50
23, 25, 27, 28, 30 F 1.50
25, 28, 29, 31, 37 VG-F 1.25
26, 27, 28, 29 32 VF 2.25
30, 32, 32, 33, 34 F + ... 1.50
30, 32 VF 2.00
30, 37 G 1.50
35, 37 VF 3.00
38, 39, 41 43 (.25 cnt) VG 1.50
38, 43, 44, 47 F + ... 2.25
39, 42, 43, 46 VG-F 1.50
39, 42, 43, 45 F 1.50
43 VF-NM 2.50
45, 48 F 1.50
49, 52 (.30 cnt) VG-F 1.50
51, VG 1.50
52 F + ... 1.50
53 VF-NM 2.50
54, 58 F + ... 1.50
57 (.35 cnt) F 1.50
58 VG-F 1.50
GHOSTLY TALES (1966-1984)
55 (.12 cnt) VG + ... 3.00
56, 56, 57, 58, 60 VG-F 2.50
56, 56, 57, 59, 60 VG 2.25
55, 57, 58, 59, 61 F 3.75
56, 57, 59 VG 3.00
58, 59, 60, 61 (12 cnt) F 4.50
60 VF 6.00
60, 63, 64, 66, 68 VF 3.50
61, 62, 63, 64, 65 VG-F 3.25
62, 63, 64, 65, 66 F 3.75
62, 64, 67 F 3.75
64, 66 VF-NM 3.50
64, 67, 68 VG 3.00
65 G 2.25
66, 68 VG-F 3.25
67, 68 F 3.75
69, 70, 71, 72, 73 F 3.50
69, 70, 71, 72, 73 F 3.75
69, 70, 77, 74 VF-NM 3.50
69, 73, 74 VG-F 3.25
69, 73, 74 VG 3.00
72, 73, 74 F + ... 4.50
74, VF 6.50
74, 75, 77 F 3.75
76, 77, 78, 79, 80 (.15 cnt) VF 3.00
76, 77, 78, 80, 81 VF 2.75
76, 77, 78 80, 83 F 2.50
77, 78, 80, 81, 82 VG-F 2.25
77, 78, 81, 82, 83 VG 2.00
79, 80, 83, 84, 86 VF-NM 3.00
82, 86, 87, 88 F 2.50
82 (.20 cnt) G 1.50
82, 83, 84, 85, 86, (.15 cnt) VF 4.25
84, 85, 86 87 (.20 cnt) F 2.50
84, 86, 88 VG-F 2.25
85, 86, 87, 88, 93 VG 2.00
87, 88 VF-NM 5.00
88 VF 4.25
89, 90, 91, 92, 94 F 1.75
89, 90, 91, 92, 94 VG 1.50
90, 92, 93, 94, 95 F + ... 1.75
90, 92, 95, 98 VG-F 1.50
94, 96, 97, 98 F 1.50
94, 98 VG 1.50
95, 96, 97, 98, 99 VF-NM 3.50
95, 96, 97 98, 99 F 2.50
100 VF-NM 4.00
100 VF 3.00
100 F 2.50
100 VG 2.00
101, 102, 103, 104 VF 2.00
101, 104, 105, 106 VF-NM 3.50
102, 105 F + ... 2.25
103, 106, 110 F 1.75
103, 104, 106, 107 VG 1.50
104, 106, 107 110 VG-F 1.50
105, 106, 107 VF 3.00
110 VF-NM 3.50
111, 114, 120 (.25 cnt) F 2.75
111, 116 VG-F 1.50
112 (.30 cnt) VG + ... 1.50
113, 116, 117 (.25 cnt) VF 2.50
115 (.30 cnt) VG 1.50
117, 119 VF-NM 2.50
GHOSTLY TALES (1971-1984 CH)
121 F + ... 1.50
121, 123 (.35 cnt) VF 2.25
122 VF-NM 2.50
122 VG-F 1.50
123 F 1.50
125, 129 (.40 cnt) VG-F 1.50
127 (.35 cnt) F + ... 1.50
131 G 1.50
132 VG-F 1.50
133 (.40 cnt) VG-F 1.50
136, 141 F 1.50
137, 140 F + ... 1.50
141, 142 VF 2.25
GIFT (CROSSGRADERS)
8 (.35 cnt) VG-F 2.25
GIRLIE LOVE
49 (.30 cnt) VG 3.75
GOOD SNOOPER
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13, 14, 15 (Ditko) F ..... 16.

continued from page 12

Many reader's letters expressed surprise at the contents of this truly historical issue. It just goes to show that there is still so much still to discover in the world's finest hobby!

The First Comic Book Writer

I finally completed my collection of Adam Strange in MYSTERY IN SPACE at this year's San Diego Con, and have been reliving my childhood ever since.

As promised, enclosed you will find a Xerox of a letter written to me by Gardner Fox in March, 1979. I exchanged three or more letters with the great Mr. Fox during 1979, the one I'm sending being his reply to my second. At the time I wrote, I had never seen an interview with him, and sent him a "laundry-list" of questions covering several aspects of comics and his career. The attached was his response.

His comment regarding Jules Feiffer on pages one and two was prompted by the following quote from THE GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES, describing the atmosphere of the industry in the 40's:

"(It was)...relentless. Some men worked in bull pens during the day; freelanced at night–a hard job to quit work at 5:30, go home and freelance till four in the morning, get up at eight and go to a job. And the weekends were the worst. A friend would call for help: He had contracted to put together a 64-page package over the weekend–a new book with new titles, new heroes–to be conceived, written, drawn and delivered to the engraver between 6:00 Friday night and 8:30 Monday morning. The presses were reserved for nine."

And, his remarks concerning comics as art and Gil Kane on page 4 are a result of the following quote from Gil Kane in ALTER-EGO 10:

"I believe that the drawing (in comics), while its appeal is primitive, is extremely sophisticated, and the stories, on the other hand, while they are written by reasonably sophisticated people, are extremely banal and primitive."

Gardner Fox was the first comic book writer, and his stories contain some of the most imaginative plotting, significant concepts, and cleverly conceived villains ever to see print. I feel that many of today's pros could benefit greatly from the study of Fox's scripts (in fact, it should be required!). Particularly, many of his stories and plots for Adam Strange, the Atom, and Hawkman stand out, even today, as super-hero comics at their best.

Who could resist sharing adventures with such stalwart heroes? Brave heroes, sure of themselves, such as: The Sandman, Dr. Fate, Starman, Skyman, the Avenger, the Flash, Cliff Cornwall, Nighthawk, Matt Savage, Super-Chief, Zatanna, the original and best super-team—the Justice Society of America, the Atom, Adam Strange and fandom's favorite, Hawkman.

Who could resist exciting tales with such mind-boggling concepts? Here, you could be teleported by a Zeta-beam, journey to Earth I and Earth II, enter the Time Pool, or use a telephone as a mode of travel.

Who could resist adventure yarns with such despicable villains? I'd like to see today's heroes tangle with the likes of Kanjar Ro, Dr. Destiny, Felix Faust, The Dust Devil, Chronos, Byth, or the Shadow-Thief, just to name a few.

And who could resist escaping into stories with such tantalizing titles as: "The Weapon That Swallowed Men," "Flash of Two Worlds," "The Planet That Came to a Standstill," "Riddle of the Runaway Rocket," "The Shadow-Thief of Midway City," "The World Where Evolution Ran Wild," or "Prisoner in a Test Tube"?

The amazing thing is not that Gardner Fox wrote about so many characters in so many stories, but rather that he wrote so many GOOD ONES! And, it's that legacy he left behind... over 4,000 stories and dozens of the greatest characters ever to leap from the comics page, which stands as testimony to this great writer.

But perhaps his greatest achievement was this: As a boy, when I leafed through the pages of a comic book and saw the words, "Story by Gardner Fox," even before I read the first word, I knew it would be a well-plotted, well-written, exciting story. I know of no higher tribute.

James D. Flanagan, Florida

A Letter From Gardner Fox

Dear Jim: To start with, I got into comics because the law, back in those Depression Days, was not something at which to get rich, so when a good friend of mine, Vin Sullivan, whom I'd known since the second grade of grammar school, suggested I try my hand at writing comics (a completely new thing, back in those days), I fell in with the idea. I'd written a lot, I was on the high school paper, the college newspaper (I wound up being Editor in Chief of the college paper in my junior year), and the idea sounded good.

I have since discovered that I was the very first writer hired to do comic book writing. I beat Otto Binder by about six months. Using my law school background, I invented "Steve Malone, District Attorney", and a story about him was my very first comic book yarn. I followed this with a Zatara, and I was on my way...

The pulps I read way back then were Argosy, All Story, Amazing, and some of the sports pulps. My favorite authors were A. Merritt, Edgar Rice Burroughs, and in the mystery field, John Dickson Carr. There was also Harold Lamb, Jeffrey Farnol and one or two others.

I was in at the early stages of Flash Comics. I worked with Sheldon Mayer, boy-editor at the time, and came up with the Flash, Hawkman, King Standish (based on Frank Packard's Grey Seal novels, if I recall correctly), and Cliff Cornwall. I also wrote the short stories which Flash Magazine carried in those days. All in all, I have written over four thousand comic book stories. My mind reels at this when I stop to think about it. If you figure that I wrote these in the span of thirty years, and break it down, you'll see what I mean.

I worked from the beginning with the Justice Society stories, though the idea of creating the Justice Society was (M.C.) Gaines' (I believe). The books were selling so well, he wanted to make even more money, I guess. Shelly (Mayer) and I would plot the whole story (he would come up to my house for dinner, and right after it, we would sit down and go to work). After a time, of course, he let me go at it by myself, but in the beginning, he wanted to have a hand in the story line; to make sure, I imagine, that when I sent in the finished product, he could just send it off to the artist without any fussing over it.

We never had any such to-do as Feiffer suggests in his book. God knows what would have come out of it if we had ever worked in such a helter-skelter way! We got our assignments and I, for one, went home and roughed out my story on a pad, in pencil, and then sat down and typed it out.

It was the practice at DC and also at Gaines' outfit (All American), to work almost hand in glove with the editors. Story lines were always

plotted with the editors with whom one worked. The idea behind this, I am certain, was that we would avoid any lawsuits for stealing stories already published. They didn't want any legal troubles.

I've worked with Shelly, Bernie Breslauer, Mort Weisinger, Murray Boltinoff, Jack Schiff and, of course, Julie Schwartz. They were all good editors, I had a great working relationship with all of them. Of course, when Julie came into the business, sometime in 1944, I believe, I began working with him, and our relationship lasted for about twenty-five years. He was and is a great editor.

As I mentioned, I knew Vin Sullivan since the second year of grammar school. When he left DC and went to Columbia, I wrote for him. I imagine I did almost all his stories– and later, of course, when he went into business for himself, I did the same.

During the 40s, I branched out into writing weird tales, science-fiction, sports and westerns for the pulps. It wasn't until 1951 or so that I wrote my first novel, THE BORGIA BLADE. I was laid up in bed with a bad cold and for want of something better to do, began writing a novel (Borgia Blade) in longhand. When I mentioned it to my agent, he said go ahead and keep on writing…it sold to Gold Medal Books, and that was the first of the hundred and sixty odd books I have written.

When Flash and Hawkman were dropped, I was writing westerns for the comics, also some animation. Times were changing, everybody was worrying about how badly television would affect comic books. I did a lot of writing during that period, all different sorts of comics, together with pulps. It wasn't until those first paperbacks came in (in 1949? 1950?) that I switched over to them, as I've mentioned above, with The Borgia Blade.

Yes, I enjoyed writing for Strange Adventures and Mystery In Space. I always liked science-fiction, and I could throw myself into it wholeheartedly. Which one did I like best? I just can't remember. There were so many…

Naturally, when Adam Strange came along, I loved doing those. Of them all, I rather imagine Adam Strange was one of my all-time favorites. I don't believe my liking for ERB had anything to do with Adam Strange, except, perhaps, sub-consciously.

I was not involved with the creation of the "new" Flash, I believe it was an editorial decision, made without consulting any writers. Or artists either, for that matter. The powers-that-be made the decision.

The fact that those letter pages appeared in the comic books may have had some influence on the content of the stories – more sophisticated, as you call it – because we realized we weren't just writing for children. Or maybe everyone in the industry was just growing up, as far as the magazines were concerned. We really never sat around analyzing all this, you must understand, we just wrote the stories and got our checks, and that was that. It my have been a subconscious sort of thing.

In revamping Hawkman for THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD, Julie and I talked it all over in one of our plot sessions, and decided on making them police man and police woman – from the planet Thanagar, here on Earth to study our methods of fighting crime. The success of our stories about Earth-One and Earth-Two had something to do with it, naturally.

The earth 1 and 2 bit came into being because we had to explain the fact that we had two Flashes, two Hawkmans; it's an old science-fiction gimmick and both Julie and I were aficionados of that genre, so it just sprang into our minds.

I rather imagine the Atom sold very well, which would be its reason for being published ahead of Hawkman in its own book. I enjoyed writing Atom as I liked writing all the stories I did. The Atom's small size naturally made me think about what situations such a tiny character would be most effective in, certainly.

Yes, I was surprised at the extent of the fandom. Of course, I knew it existed, but its magnitude was something none of us were really prepared for. As I've said at other times, if I'd known– or guessed – at what it would be, I'd have made notes about those early years, which are rather dim in my memory now. I doubt that any feedback from Bails or Thomas had very much of an influence, though we always kept their ideas in the back of our minds.

When Julie was given the Batman to do, it was just another job. Sure, I was reluctant to give up Adam Strange, but Batman offered a challenge, too – and I'd written so much about Adam Strange, it was getting tougher and tougher to dream up new situations. I just rode with the punches, and swung over to Batman without any trouble.

The TV Batman was very camp. It was a fun thing. I always felt that the comic book Batman should be more evocative of chills and thrills.

Marvel did influence the thinking at DC. Its success was like a jab in the back to the powers-that-be. And, I suppose, and for a time, there was a decision to emulate the Marvel books. Maybe that's why the humor, I've written it, but I have always felt that superhero characters shouldn't go through their paces having fun at every page and arguing like kindergarten kids (as Marvel's characters always seem to do – or did).

I always admired Carmine Infantino as an artist. When he became the editor in chief at DC, I left. Not, I hasten to add, because of his being made editor, but because I was to do no more work with Julie. I decided it was time for a change…

The all-fighting type of story is ridiculous, in my judgment. All you have is a series of fights. I rather imagine that even the artists should get weary of those. There was no plot, or very little, and what's a story without a plot?

I went to work for Marvel because Roy Thomas asked me to. I was all but finished with comic work, though, and had decided to devote myself just to writing my novels. I've never been sorry.

I do feel comics are a legitimate art form. I object to the manner in which some of the stories are presented – just a lot of fighting, squabbling, arguing. This is a story? DC always was at one disadvantage, to my way of thinking: each book had to be complete. This resulted in leaving out much that could be put in, to enhance the characterization, to flesh out the story line. Marvel used several issues to tell one story. When I was there, DC never did this.

Gil Kane's remark about 'banal and primitive' stories fits in here. The artist draws one picture at a time. He makes that good or bad. The writer is compelled by the space limitations of the comic book to cramp in his story to fit into a certain number of pages.

I have never regretted giving up my law work. I've had too much fun writing.

Hope this answers all your questions. It was good to hear from you again. Stay well.

—Gardner F. Fox

Since the very beginning of my relationship

with comic books, Gardner Fox has always been and continues to be, for me, the most prolific, creative, and just plain entertaining writer in comic book history. One of my saddest moments as a fan was when I learned of his passing. I'll always regret not having the opportunity to tell him how much his stories expanded my thinking and brightened my youth. To this day, I'm still periodically searching the night skies, hoping the Zeta Beam will bring him back from Rann...

Collectors' Showcase Magazine

Like a lot of your other readers, I'm enjoying your magazine immensely. But it looks like someone isn't getting enough credit—your wife, Lisa! Your articles may be well written and interesting, but they wouldn't be nearly as appealing if not for the excellent design and packaging that your "design director" oversees. And she's always very courteous on the phone. Keep up the good work, Lisa!

Gary, as you know, I'm the comic book editor for Collectors' Showcase magazine (7130 S. Lewis, Tulsa, OK 74136) Our magazine covers animation art, Americana, toys, Disneyana, and many other collectibles, but we're devoting more attention than ever to comic books. One of the best parts of this job is dealing with people like you, Bruce Mohrhard, Steve Fishler, Jef Hinds, Jerry Weist, Bob Overstreet, Dave Anderson, John Snyder, and the folks at Sotheby's and Christie's.

In the past year or so, Collectors' Showcase has published features on EC horror comics, Golden Age and Silver Age market explosions, and original comic art collecting. A recent feature on Carl Barks items was very well received. In the coming year, articles are planned on "How to Get Started in Comic Collecting,"Romance Comics", the growing market of 1970s comics, and early Captain America comics.

We regularly expose our readers to the popular collectible, but CBM is in a league of its own when it comes to your focus on Golden and Silver Age comics. In fact, in each of my articles, I attempt to assist our readers who want to know more about comics, which means we give a plug to CBM at every opportunity. Thanks for providing such an important role in the comic book business and regularly helping me out from time to time.

Dale Ingram, Illinois

I've genuinly enjoyed your excellent issues and can heartily recommend your magzine! Best of luck with future issues.And your right, Lisa doesn't get nearly the credit she deserves!

SOS From Greg Theakston

I was shocked and delighted to discover Comic Book Marketplace at the Tri-State comic convention. Eighteen issues, and I'm only discovering you now! How come nobody tipped me off to this well-kept-secret? Certainly enough of my friends are already contributing (Rich Halegua, Duane Dimock, etc.) This is just the magazine I've been looking for: one that caters to book collectors, not periodical collectors. I have a lot of topics to cover, so I'll start with your Oct. issue.

Re: Marketplace Mail. Tom Hesse is correct when he points out that Ditko's first published story was for Simon and Kirby's Prize Comic, BLACK MAGIC #27 (Nov 1953). Ditko also inked CAPTAIN 3-D (Dec 1953), so FANTASTIC FEARS #5 (Jan 1954) is actually Ditko's third work in comics. I'm looking forward to an issue on Steve.

Pierre Comtois' letter about Gaines and MAD is on the money, except for his claim that Bill never stepped over the boundaries of good taste. Remember the issue that featured nothing but a hand giving the reader the finger? He apologized for it later.

Pierre also asks "Who painted those magnificent Gold Key covers?" The answer is George Wilson, no not Dennis The Menace's next door neighbor, George Wilson the painter. He did hundreds of great covers for them, and frequently used NYC model Steve (Man of a Thousand Covers) Holland. Steve was the model for dozens of series, including the Doc Savage books. Sharp eyes will detect Holland in many of the Wilson paintings, particularly the Turok series.

Alan Bahr asked about the medallions offered in the mid-sixties. Those coins were produced in the Detroit area, and if my memory serves me right, they were produced by Mike, Greg and Tim Donnahoe (a.k.a. The Donnahoe Brudders). Seems to me they produced the three that they advertised and had plans to do, or did do, a Star Trek coin. The brothers launched one of the country's first direct-sales comic book companies before they went out of business.

Very pleased to see all of the coverage on Basil "Freak-beak" Wolverton. The "Acoustics In The Comics" was typical Wolverton, and a very rare item. I already had the Dick Voll interview, but thanks for giving it another outing. The Graphic Story World it appears in now sells for $25 and up, so you did the casual readers a favor. I purchased one comic at the Tri-State show where I got your magazine, Target Vol. 2#10, featuring "Spacehawk and the Disks of Death". Imagine my surprise to see the splash page reproduced on page 35.

Wolverton fans will be happy to hear that P.I. is about to begin reprinting his work in our new title, "Intense!" The first issue is due in December and will feature two Powerhouse Pepper stories, plus the aforementioned Spacehawk episode. I've got piles of Wolverton waiting for re-release, from The Mystic Moot to Bing Bang Buster to vintage Powerhouse Pepper stories. In fact, the second issue of Intense! will reprint the Wolverton material from Powerhouse Pepper #1.

I'm sure that your readers will be happy to learn that work is underway to reprint some great Golden Age material. Over the past four years, Pure Imagination has been collecting low grade copies of key books in preparation for several major projects. The first is The Complete Lou Fine, and is just what it sounds like, everything Lou Fine produced for the comics. The first volume is slated for spring and features all of The Flame stories from Wonder World Comics and his Dollman stories from Feature Comics (including Will Eisner's origin story). Next up will probably be the Uncle Sam stories from National Comics, then The Black Condor from Crack Comics, and The Ray from Smash Comics. Then, I'll go back and do the Wilton of the West, Diary of Dr. Hayward, and Count of Monte Cristo, stories done for Eisner and Iger.

I need some help on this project and I'm sending out an S.O.S. First, when Jerry Iger died, his collection was sold off to the public. I managed to get good copies of the proof pages from Wilton and Hayward, but have been unable to locate the Count of Monte Cristo pages. Does anyone know where they are? Also, I need low grade and/or coverless copies of the following books to finish The Complete Lou Fine: Feature Comics #28,29,32,36, National Comics #4,5,6,7,9,10,11,17, Crack #1,2,3,4,7,13, Smash #14,15,18. I'm willing to buy or trade for these numbers.

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At the same time, things are drawing to a finish on The Complete Jack Kirby. A collection of Kirby's comic book material from his first custom story in Crash Comics #1 to the work he produced for Timely Publishing. Every page of his art will be reproduced in the order that it was published, so the reader will be able to watch Jack's talent mature over a three year period. Work on this project is also going well, but I'm stuck on a hand full of books. They can all be coverless, and include: Science Comics #4 (Fox), Famous Funnies #73,75,76,77,78, Red raven #1, Blue Bolt #3-9, Daring Mystery #7, Prize Comics #7 (need cover and interior), Daring #7 (cover only).

Love the convention photos! You could run twice as many and still make me happy. The shot of Richard Halegua gobbling up Silver Age art is very symbolic.

Greg Theakston, New York

Best of luck on your various projects, Greg, and thanks for all of fandom for the upcoming reprints (no easy task I know). Maybe some CBM readers can help you out with the missing material. The convention photos are always a lot of fun. I shoot enough of them to fill an entire issue of CBM. That picture of Rich was not really symbolic... he was actually eating that page of original art! You know what a serious collector Rich is. When faced with the prospect of selling his beloved art page, he decided that ingestion was the only acceptable alternative...But of course that's alimentary, my dear Greg; simply alimentary...

The Ultimate Superman Cover

I recently attended a comic convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I wasted no time in finding beautiful copies of Mary Marvel #1 and Mystery In Space #1, as well as several 12¢ keys. As the convention neared its end, I stopped to see John Hauser, a dealer-friend, to check out his selection one more time before I left.

I was rummaging through his Golden Age boxes when all of a sudden... there it was! The cover was so striking, so powerful, so beautiful, so artistically sound, that I quickly pulled it out of the bin and loudly exclaimed "WOW"! The book was not a 1st appearance or a 1st edition but I immediately fell in love with it. I also knew that, despite the $700 price tag, I had to have it.

John Hauser, observing the Rabid look in my eyes, could probably have upped the price by $100 and I still would have bought it. Being the nice guy that he is, however, he lowered the price to $600 and I wrote him a check. The book was Superman #53, the 10th anniversary issue! Although I'm not a collector of Superman Comics, the cover was too fantastic to resist! This has to be the best, the most classic Superman cover ever!

Superman stands boldly in the center of a golden-yellow cover–hands on hips, cape blown back by the wind! Framed by a circle of black outer space, the planet Krypton explodes in the upper right – the words "Featuring the Origin of Superman" in the center of the blast, announcing Superman's birth! Being Superman, lower left, the rocket carrying baby Kal-el blasts through the heavens towards Earth! Loudly proclaimed over the Superman logo is "10th Anniversary Issue!" Beneath Superman's feet are the words... "World's Greatest Adventure Character!" This cover is so perfect in concept that it almost looks like a movie prop!

I love classic covers such as Batman #1 which truly captures the look and spirit of Batman and Robin. Nothing that I've seen in Superman covers, however (including the legendary Action #1 and Superman #1), captures the look, the essence, the strength and majesty of the Superman character, as does the cover of Superman #53.

Wow! All this praise and it's not even a 1st appearance or a 1st edition... This cover has my fervent vote as the best Superman cover of all time, and is currently my favorite comic book! Whew! I didn't think that I could possibly find anything at that convention that would blow me away. Let's hear it for Superman #53! (P.S. Who is the artist(s), who did the magnificent job on that cover? It is truly his masterpiece!)

John Mlachnik, Minnesota

Although not 100% positive, I'd be willing to bet that the predominant cover artist is Wayne Boring. My brother and I have always been admirers of Superman #51, and share your enthusiasm for one of the all-time great examples of superb cover graphics!

Keif's Komments

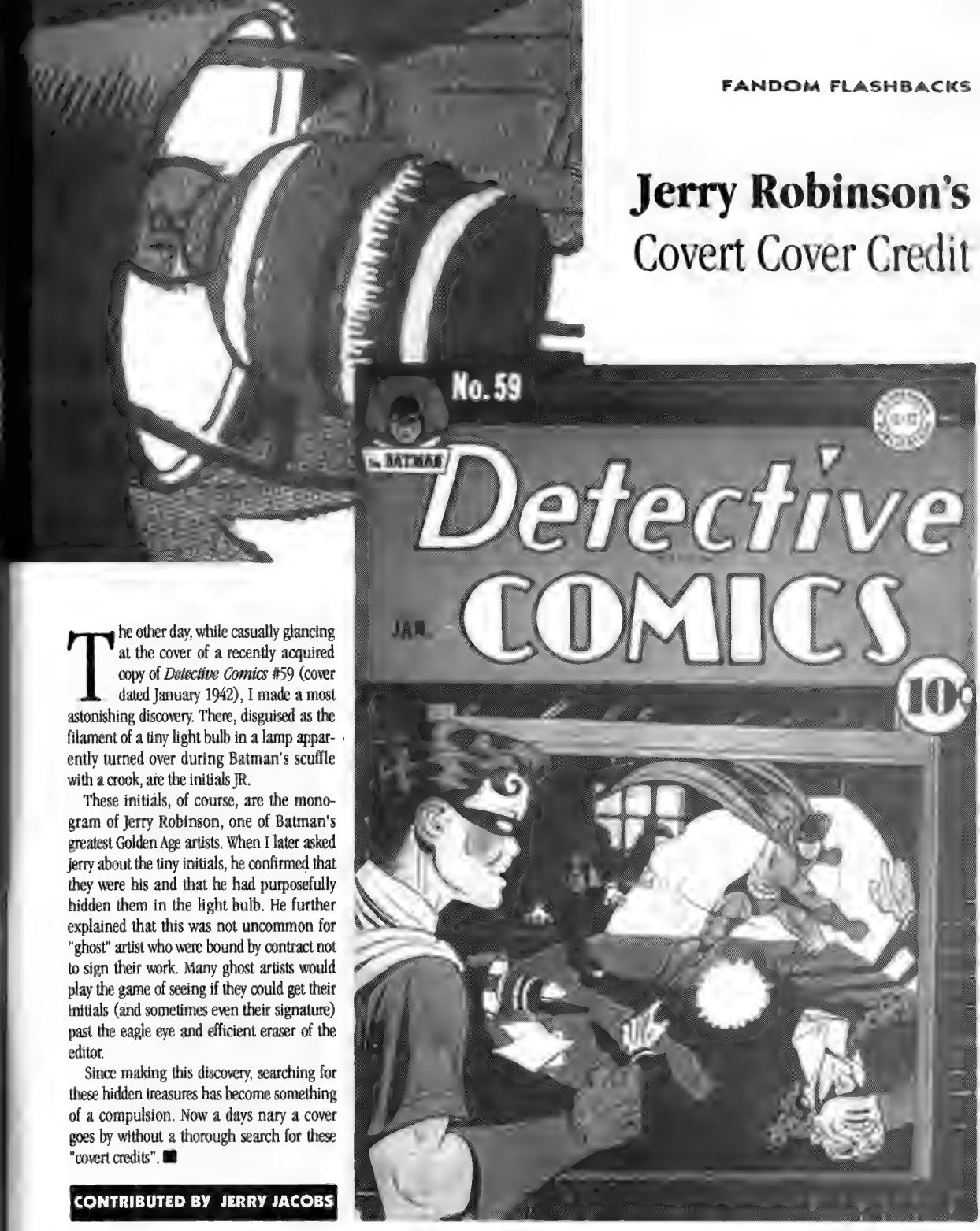
The both of you construct a simply supreme publication. The interview with Joseph Barbera that you published (CBM #20), came out better than I had expected. The overall layout and editing of the interview was excellent. I hope your readers enjoyed the interview as with this great animation pioneer as much as I enjoyed conducting it. Mr. Barbera is one of the most gracious of people anyone could hope to encounter. Thank you Mr. Barbera for taking the time to provide such a wonderful interview.

Keif A. Fromm, Massachusetts

If the mail is any indicator, it looks like your interview with Joe Barbera was a hit. CBM readers should know that we somehow managed to mis-spelled Keif Fromm's name in every single location possible. Sheeeeeesh... sorry about that! But Lisa and I thought of a possible way to solve this oversight... have you ever thought of changing your name? Seriously though, we've added the correct spelling of your name to the computers "spell checker" in the hopes that electronic technology will preclude errors of this nature in your future contributions. Thanks again for a great interview. And best of luck in your college studies.

Thanks also to the many Fans, collectors, and dealers who took the time to write this month. Your comments and suggestions are always much apreciated. Since this is the last issue for awhile, Lisa and I would like to sincerely express our appreciation to everyone who has supported this "fan" project during the last two years. Have a great holiday and HAPPY COLLECTING! Adieu...

Jerry Robinson's Covert Cover Credit



The other day, while casually glancing at the cover of a recently acquired copy of *Detective Comics* #59 (cover dated January 1942), I made a most astonishing discovery. There, disguised as the filament of a tiny light bulb in a lamp apparently turned over during Batman's scuffle with a crook, are the initials JR.

These initials, of course, are the monogram of Jerry Robinson, one of Batman's greatest Golden Age artists. When I later asked Jerry about the tiny initials, he confirmed that they were his and that he had purposefully hidden them in the light bulb. He further explained that this was not uncommon for "ghost" artist who were bound by contract not to sign their work. Many ghost artists would play the game of seeing if they could get their initials (and sometimes even their signature) past the eagle eye and efficient eraser of the editor.

Since making this discovery, searching for these hidden treasures has become something of a compulsion. Now a days nary a cover goes by without a thorough search for these "covert credits". ■

CONTRIBUTED BY JERRY JACOBS

HUGH O'KENNON 2204 HAVILAND DR., RICHMOND, VA 23229

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Please enclose payment and self-addressed stamped envelope with order. If payment is by personal check, order may be held until check clears. No minimum order, but on orders under $75.00, please include $2.50 for shipping and handling. In many cases shipment will be by U.P.S., so a street address instead of a P.O. Box will be appreciated and will help speed the package to you. DESCRIPTION CODES: m-mint; nm-near mint; fn-fine; vg-very good; g-good; fr-fair; co means centerfold missing; ow means otherwise. MY GUARANTEE: If you are not completely satisfied any book may be returned, in same condition received, for a full refund. Foreign orders, including Canada, must be in U.S. Funds and should include enough extra to cover postage. Overseas airmail (not insured) is $7.00 plus 85¢ per book. If you wish to call and reserve a book, I can be reached on (804) 270 2465. Please do not call after 10:30 PM (Eastern) and no collect calls can be accepted. If you wish to have extended terms on any purchase, just let me know.

ACE..#2 vy light tan pgs ow fn+-nm 275.00
ACES HIGH..#2 light store name stamp top bk cvr ow vf-nm 42.00
#2 fn 18.00
ACTION..#25 unnecessary tape on spine & co ow vg-fn 75.00
#35 narrow sun shadow rt cvr edge & ½" cvr tear ow vf-nm (early Boring art) 400.00
#71 vf+ (Jack Burnley cvr) 195.00
#81 appears to be some repair & touch-up along spine ow fn+-nm 120.00
#168 fn-nm 80.00
#207 g 15.00
#257 ½" & ½" cvr tears ow fn-nm 19.00
#261 vg - 10.00; #273 vg 8.50
#327 "5¢" in ink on cvr ow fn-nm 3.50
#330 sev cor creases ow fn 3.00
#333 vg+ - 2.50; #334 fn 6.00
#339 fn - 3.50; #348 vg+ 2.00
#352 fn+ 3.00
ADAM-12..#1 m - 15.00; #1 fn 6.00
ADVENTURE..#53 fn-nm 400.00
#105 vf - 295.00; #109 vf-nm 245.00
#149 fn-nm 115.00
#153 name top cvr ow fr-g 20.00
#164 nm 200.00
#164 fn+ 75.00
#164 2" tear cvr ow fn+-nm 65.00
#168 light 2" cor crease ow nm 185.00
#169 nm 200.00
ADVENTURE INTO MYSTERY..#2 vg-fn 13.00
ADVENTURES IN 3-D..#1 vg-fn, no glasses 20.00
ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN..#5 fn-nm 75.00
ADVENTURES OF ALAN LADD..#2 fn+-nm 140.00
ADVENTURES OF BOB HOPE..#1 1/8" cor off lower rt cvr ow fn+-nm 250.00
ADVENTURES OF DEAN MARTIN & JERRY LEWIS. #24 vg-fn 10.00
ADVENTURES OF JERRY LEWIS..#104 25¢ size color flaked off lower left cvr ow vg+ 5.00
ADVENTURES ON THE PLANET OF THE APES.. #1 vf 2.50
AFRICA..#1 vg-fn 28.00
AIR ACE..v 2 #1 fn+ 28.00
AIR FIGHTERS..#1 fn+ 310.00
v 2 #8 light rolled sp ow fn 100.00
v 2 #8 fair-g 20.00
AL CAPP'S DOGPATCH..#71 (#1) nm 110.00
#71 (#1) vg-fn 38.00
#2 vg-fn - 26.00; #3 vg 20.00
AL CAPP'S SHMOO..#1 fn+ 70.00
#2 fn+ 55.00
ALEXANDER THE GREAT..FC 688 nm 26.00
ALL-AMERICAN..#44 vg-fn 150.00
#47 sm stress tears at staple & 1/8" color flaked off sp & 1" tear in margin of 1 pg ow nm 350.00
#49 vg+ 98.00
#51 vy sm nick out top sp & 7" cor crease bk cvr ow vf 220.00
#62 vf 190.00
ALL-AMERICAN..#85 ¼" sq pc tape inside lower rt cvr ow fn+ 110.00
ALL AMERICAN MEN OF WAR..#127 (1952) 3½" cor off bk cvr ow vg+-fn 50.00
#2 fn 60.00
#9 ½" tear lower rt cvr ow fn+-nm 65.00
#10 fn 34.00
#19 large date stamp on cvr ow vg-fn 16.00
#74 vg - 3.00; #106 g 1.00
ALL-AMERICAN WESTERN..#104 vg 32.00
ALL-FLASH..#8 partially loose at bottom staple & vy light center crease ow fn 125.00
#13 vg+ 225.00
#14 sm water stain upper left bk cvr & some pgs ow g+-vg 65.00
#26 vf-nm 225.00
ALL GOOD..#1 vg 15.00
ALL NEW..#7 ½" nick out bottom sp & 3" cor crease ow fn+-nm 100.00
ALL STAR..#5 some stress tearing at staples ow fn 900.00
#5 vg+-fn 875.00
#14 sm pc out top bk cvr & sev vy sm cvr edge tears ow vg+-fn 350.00
#15 g 175.00
#18 light 1" cor crease ow fn+ 360.00
ALL STAR WESTERN.(1951)..#58 4" cor off bk cvr ow g 17.00
ALL STAR WESTERN.(1970)..#1 vf 4.50
AMAZING ADULT FANTASY..#9 g+-vg 18.00
AMAZING ADVENTURES.(Z-D)..#1 fn 110.00
#1 sm, light stain bk cvr edge ow fn 100.00
#6 fn+-nm - 100.00; #6 fn-vf 70.00
AMAZING FANTASY..#15 sev sm chips out rt cvr edge ow vg+ 800.00
AMAZING GHOST STORIES..#16 fn+ 30.00
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN..#1 vg-fn 1,500.00
#5 chips out top 2½" of rt cvr edge & sm edge tears ow vg+-fn 140.00
#6 chips & pcs out rt cvr edge ow fn+ 125.00
#7 fn-vf - 175.00; #8 nm 425.00
#8 fn - 150.00; #9 vf-nm 395.00
#9 fn 155.00
#9 ink name on bk cvr ow fn 120.00
#10 vf-nm - 340.00; #11 vf+-nm 250.00
#12 light browning inside cvr edges ow fn-nm 125.00
#12 ¼" tear top last 3 pgs & bk cvr ow vf 100.00
#13 nm 330.00
#14 hardly noticdable repaired 1" tear in middle cvr near bottom ow vf 450.00
#15 nm 285.00
#16 fn+-nm 150.00
#16 1 3/4" cor off bk cvr ow fn-nm 80.00
#16 vg 46.00
#17 sev vy sm tears top cvr ow vf 240.00
#18 nm-m 225.00
#18 ¼" tear cvr edge ow vf 140.00
#18 sm cor crease ow fn 85.00
#18 vy sm nick out bottom bk cvr ow fn+ 70.00
#19 fn-vf - 85.00; #19 vg+ 46.00
#20 vf+-nm 185.00

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AMAZING SPIDER-MAN..#20 vf-nm 135.00
#21 vf - 88.00; #21 fn 55.00
#22 light 1 3/4" cor crease upper rt cvr ow nm 100.00
#22 vg-fn - 39.00; #23 nm 195.00
#23 ¼" cvr tear ow vg+ 45.00
#23 some water stain lower left of book ow vg-fn - 29.00; #24 vf 80.00
#24 vg-fn 34.00
#25 4½" cor crease bk cvr ow nm 125.00
#26 vf-nm 145.00
#27 vy light 1" cor crease upper rt cvr ow nm 130.00
#27 fn - 60.00; #28 vf-nm 140.00
#29 fn-vf - 60.00; #29 vg-fn 31.00
#30 light 1" cor crease ow fn+-nm 85.00
#30 ½" cor off cvr ow fn-nm 38.00
#31 1/16" cor off lower rt cvr ow fn-nm 38.00
#32 g-vg, #33 g-vg 14.00
#35 vf-nm - 65.00; #36 nm 80.00
#36 two vy sm tears bottom cvr ow vf-nm 55.00
#36 sev long but vy light scratches bk cvr ow fn+-nm 45.00
#37 fn+-nm - 70.00; #37 fn 33.00
#38 fn+-nm - 70.00; #38 fn-nm 48.00
#40 vf - 105.00; #40 fn-vf 70.00
#40 browning inside cvrs ow vg-fn 28.00
#41 vf - 47.00; #41 fn+ 30.00
#42 fn+-nm - 50.00; #43 vf-nm 39.00
#43 browning inside cvr edges & tan pgs & some water stain top cvr ow fn+ 11.00
#44 browning inside cvr edges ow fn+ 15.00
#45 nm - 48.00; #45 fn+ 22.00
#47 fn+-nm 38.00
#49 ½" tear bk cvr ow nm 45.00
#49 fn - 19.00; #50 nm 190.00
#52 g 3.50
#59 cvr loose at top staple ow nm 25.00
#59 ½" cor off sev pgs ow fn 12.00
#60 fn+-nm 29.00
#61 sm tear bk cvr & last pg ow fn-nm 15.00
#62 sev sm water stains inside bottom cvr ow nm - 10.00; #62 vg 4.50
#63 vf-nm, #65 vf-nm 22.00
#65 fn-nm 10.00
#69 ¼" tear top cvr ow nm 27.00
#71 nm, #72 nm 28.00
#74 vf-nm 20.00
#76 clean ½" tear top cvr ow nm 20.00
#78 nm 22.00
#79 ½" cor crease upper rt ow nm 20.00
#80 nm 22.00
#82 vy light 2" cor crease ow nm-m 15.00
#83 nm 22.00
#84 ½" cor lower rt partially torn off ow fn 6.00
#85 light 2" cor crease ow nm-m 16.00
#86 1" cor crease ow fn+-nm 12.00
#86 vg+ 4.00
#94 fn+-nm (origin retold) 30.00
#96 fn+ - 18.00; #97 vg+-fn 14.00
#100 damp spot & rust at each staple ow vg-fn 15.00
#121 fn+ 30.00
#122 light date stamp ow nm 85.00
#122 fn+ - 40.00; #150 vg-fn 3.50
#161 m - 12.00; #253 nm-m 7.00
#253 sharp ½" cor crease ow nm-m 5.00
#258 m 9.00
King-Size Special #4..3½" & 1" cor creases & tan pgs ow fn+ 10.00
King-Size Special #5 fn+-nm 12.00
Special #8 ¼" pc out bottom sp ow fn 11.00
Annual #18 m 7.00
ALL Detergent giveaway, nm-m 6.00

SPIDERMAN VS THE HULK..Columbus Dispatch supplement..½" tape top & bottom bk sp ow fn+ 2.00
AMAZING WILLIE MAYS..No # 1" cor off 1 pg ow fn+-nm 200.00
AMERICA'S BEST..#30 fn-nm 52.00
AMERICA'S BEST TV COMICS..#1 narrow 1½" strip off bottom sp & 6" cor crease bk cvr ow fn+-nm 9.00
ANDY BURNETT.(Disney).FC 865 fn 14.00
FC 865 g+-vg 4.50
ANDY PANDA..FC 54 file copy with usual browning inside cvr edges & tan pgs ow nm 80.00
FC 154 ink name upper rt cvr ow vg 10.00
FC 240 vg-fn 8.00
FC 240 2" cor off 1 pg ow vg 6.00
FC 345 vg-fn - 5.50; FC 383 vg+-fn 4.50
#33 fn 2.00
ANGEL & THE APE..#2 sm light water stain bottom bk cvr & few pgs ow vf 5.00
ANIMAL FABLES..#1 fn+ 85.00
ANIMATED.(EC)..#1 fn-nm (Rare) 270.00
ANNIE OAKLEY.(1948) #3 fn 30.00
ANNIE OAKLEY.(Atlas)..#5 nm 45.00
#11 fn+-nm 22.00
AQUAMAN..#17 ¼" tear & vy tiny hole top cvr ow vg+-fn 8.00
#18 fn - 12.00; #20 vg-fn 8.00
#21 vg-fn - 5.00; #22 g+ 2.00
#50 large store name stamp on cvr ow vg 3.50
#51 vg+ 4.50
#52 sm tear lower rt cvr ow fn 6.00
#56 fn+-nm 5.00
ARCHIE..#33 sm coupon off bk cvr ow g-vg 10.00
ARCHIE ANNUAL..#25 fn-vf 2.50
ARCHIE & ME..#34 fn-vf 1.50
ARCHIE'S GIRLS, BETTY & VERONICA..#165 fn 1.50
#171 vg-fn, #187 fn 1.00
Annual #4 vg 20.00
Annual #6 sm stain inside bottom frt cvr ow fn 28.00
Annual #8 fn+ 35.00
ARCHIE'S JOKE BOOK..#24 fn 19.00
#26 fn-nm - 35.00; #27 fn-nm 30.00
#30 vg+-fn 20.00
ARCHIE'S MAD HOUSE..#49 fn+-nm 1.50
ARIZONA KID..#1 ¼" tear cvr edge ow vf 40.00
ARMY WAR HEROES..#36 vf 2.50
ASTONISHING TALES..#1 vf-nm 13.00
THE ATOM..#2 sev vy sm nicks out rt cvr edge ow fn-nm 80.00
#3 1" crayon X under price ow vg-fn 20.00
#4 sev sm cor creases lower rt cvr ow fn+ 35.00
#5 tape on sp ow vg+ 7.50
#6 vg+-fn 24.00
#7 pc 3" x 1" out bk cvr edge ow vg-fn 15.00
#9 vg - 14.00; #10 g-vg 10.00
#11 vg-fn 15.00
#15 3¼" cor crease ow vg+-fn 11.00
#15 vg - 10.00; #16 vg-fn 10.00
#17 rust on top staple ow fn-nm 15.00
#17 large store name stamp on logo ow vg+-fn 8.00
#18 fn 12.00
#19 top staple popped ow fn+ 10.00
#19 vg+-fn - 10.00; #20 vg+ 8.00
#20 1" cor off top bk cvr & ½" off top left frt cvr ow fn 5.00
#21 g-vg - 3.50; #22 fn+ 8.00
#22 vg+ 5.50
#23 tan pgs ow fn+ 9.00
#23 vg - 5.00; #25 fn 8.50
#26 vg+-fn - 7.50; #27 fn 9.00
#28 vg-fn 7.00
#30 ½" tear bottom cvr ow fn+ 9.00
#32 vg+-fn - 7.50; #33 fn-vf 12.00

ATOM..#34 fr-g 2.00
#35 large stare name stamp on cvr ow fn 7.00
#36 fn-vf - 15.00; #37 fn 9.00
#38 stained bk cvr ow vg-fn 6.00
ATOM & HAWKMAN..#39 fn 6.50
#41 fn+ - 7.50; #42 fn-vf 9.00
#43 light tan pgs ow fn+ 4.50
#43 vg+ - 4.50; #44 fn+ 7.50
#45 fn 6.50
AVENGERS..#8 light 3½" cor crease top & bottom ow fn+ 35.00
#8 vg - 27.00; #11 fn+ 45.00
#12 fn-nm 45.00
#13 vy sm nick out rt cvr edge ow fn 23.00
#14 1" & ½" tears bk cvr ow fn 21.00
#14 vg-fn - 20.00; #15 fn+-nm 60.00
#16 2 staple size holes bottom sp & tiny nick out cvr edge ow fn+ 18.00
#17 fn+-nm - 33.00; #19 fn 18.00
#21 vg+-fn - 10.00; #22 fn 15.00
#22 vg+-fn - 13.00; #22 vg 9.00
#23 vg+ - 10.00; #26 fn+-nm 18.00
#28 fn-nm 12.00
#28 pc 1" x ½" out bottom bk cvr ow fn-nm, #29 vg+ 6.50
#35 1" cor crease ow fn+-nm 7.50
#37 fn+-nm - 11.00; #46 vg+ 3.50
#50 vg+ 3.00
#52 partially loose at bottom staple ow fn - 4.00; #54 g 1.50
#55 3½" scratch bottom cvr ow vg-fn 3.00
#59 vg+-fn 4.00
#59 top staple popped ow fn 3.50
#60 fn - 6.00; #60 vg+-fn 4.50
#61 vg - 3.00; #62 fn-nm 7.00
#63 nm 15.00
#64 bottom staple popped ow nm 12.00
#64 fn - 4.50; #65 nm-m 15.00
#65 fn+-nm - 9.00; #66 nm 15.00
#66 fn+-nm - 9.00; #66 vg+-fn 4.50
#67 nm - 15.00; #68 nm 10.00
#70 fn 3.50
#77 ¼" cvr tear ow vf 5.00
#81 fn+-nm, #85 fn+-nm 6.00
#87 nm - 14.00; #88 fn+-nm 6.50
#90 fn+-nm, #91 fn+-nm 6.50
#93 nm - 40.00; #99 vf 16.00
#101 nm 6.50
King-Size Special #1 (1967) nm 38.00
King-Size Special #1 sev sm cor creases ow fn 15.00
King-Size Special #1 3" tape bottom spine ow vg-fn 10.00
Annual #2 ¼" cor crease ow vf 10.00
King-Size Special #3 (1969) 3" cor crease ow vf 10.00
Special #3 fn+ 7.00
Special #3 vg-fn 3.50
King-Size Special #4 (1971) vf-nm 5.00
King-Size Special #4 fn 2.50
Special #5 (1972) ½" cvr tear ow fn-nm 3.00
Special #5 tape on sp ow g+-vg 1.50
King-Size Annual #10 fn-vf 4.00
BABE RUTH SPORTS..#7 brownish pg edges ow fn+-nm 39.00
BAD MEN OF TOMBSTONE.(Avon)..No # nm 40.00
THE BARKER..#2 fn+ 15.00
#3 vg-fn 7.00
#4 light tan pgs ow fn 8.00
#5 fn - 8.50; #6 vg+-fn 8.00
BARNEY & BETTY RUBBLE..#1 vf-nm 15.00
BASEBALL HEROES..No # fair 20.00
BATLASH..#6 vg-fn 2.00
#6 vg+ 1.50

BATMAN..#12 vf-nm 1,100.00
#17 sm tear bottom cvr ow vg+-fn 250.00
#21 pencil initials "SN" bottom cvr ow fn+-nm 560.00
#22 vy, vy light, almost unnoticeable center crease ow nm 595.00
#22 long diag. crease ow fn 240.00
#26 light center crease bk cvr ow nm 650.00
#26 fn-nm 450.00
#35 ¼" tear rt cvr edge & slt wrinkle in cvr ow nm 400.00
#58 sev vy sm cvr tears ow fn 160.00
#86 fn 120.00
#113 ½" cor off bk cvr ow fn-vf 75.00
#164 vg+-fn - 13.00; #165 fn 15.00
#166 fn - 15.00; #168 vg+ 11.00
#170 sm pc tape at top staple ow vg 7.00
#172 vg+-fn 9.50
#183 top staple popped ow fn+ 9.00
#184 vg 7.00
#184 bottom staple popped ow vg+ 5.00
#186 g-vg - 3.00; #189 vg 4.00
#204 bottom staple popped ow fn-nm 6.00
#209 vg - 3.00; #215 fn+ 5.00
#216 fn - 4.50; #224 vg+-fn 3.50
#226 fn+ 4.00
#226 sev sm tears bk cvr ow fn 3.50
#229 fn+-nm - 6.50; #237 vg+-fn 8.00
#242 fn+-nm 6.50
#246 sm date stamp ow fn 3.50
#248 fn+-nm 6.50
#254 tiny hole at staple ow nm 7.00
#255 ½" tear bk cvr ow nm 14.00
BATMAN-THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS..Boon One, m 30.00
Book One, second printing, m 5.00
Book Two, m 16.00
Book Three, m - 6.00; Book Four, m 5.00
BAT MASTERSON..FC 1013 off white pgs ow nm 35.00
FC 1013 fn - 17.00; FC 1013 vg-fn 12.00
#2 fn-nm - 17.00; #3 vg+ 7.50
#4 nm 28.00
#4 ¼" cvr tear ow nm 22.00
#4 vg-fn - 8.00; #5 nm, #6 nm 25.00
#7 nm, #9 nm 25.00
#9 1" tear at bottom staple ow fn-nm 5.50
BATTLE ACTION..#17 vg 2.50
BATTLE BRADY..#13 vg 3.50
BATTLEFIELD.(War On The)..#4 ½" tear top cvr ow fn+ 7.00
BATTLEFRONT..#14 ¼" tear bottom cvr ow vg+-fn 4.00
#17 fn+ 5.00
BEAGLE BOYS VS UNCLE SCROOGE..#5 m 3.00
BEEP BEEP THE ROAD RUNNER..#58 nm-m 3.50
#81 nm-m 3.00
BEETLE BAILEY..#8 fn, #37 m 7.00
#37 fn - 3.00; #38 nm 7.00
BEN & ME..FC 539 vg 3.00
BEN BOWIE AND HIS MOUNTAIN MEN..#17 m 10.00
BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES..GK Movie, nm-m 25.00
BEST OF UNCLE SCROOGE & DONALD DUCK..#1 vg 8.00
BEST ROMANCE..#6 fn-nm 9.50
BETTY & ME..#5 fn+-nm 10.00
#6 tiny pc out lower rt cvr ow fn-nm 3.50
BEWARE THE CREEPER..#3 fn+ 7.00
#3 off white pgs ow nm 14.00
#3 fn - 6.50; #5 vg+-fn 6.00
BIG CHIEF WAHOO..#1 slt rolled sp ow vg+-fn 44.00
#6 2" tear top 1 pg where uncut page pulled apart ow nm-m 35.00
BIG SHOT..#34 fn+-nm 40.00
#44 fn+ - 23.00; #53 fn+ 18.00
BILL BARNES, AMERICA'S AIR ACE..#5 1" cor crease ow fn+-nm 80.00
BILL ELLIOTT..FC 278 ink name ow g+-vg 10.00

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BLACK CAT..#9 fn+-nm 80.00
#20 light tanning bottom pgs ow fn+-nm 45.00
#60 vg 11.00
BLACKHAWK..#11 vf 225.00
#50 vg-fn - 37.00; #79 fn+-nm 61.00
#117 vg+-fn - 15.00; #134 vg 6.50
#137 ¼" cvr tear ow fn-nm 15.00
#153 vg+ - 4.50; #154 fn 6.50
#155 fn+ - 7.00; #159 vg 4.00
#161 fn - 6.50; #162 vg-fn 4.50
#163 fn-nm - 8.00; #200 vg 1.50
#207 fn - 2.00; #208 vg-fn 1.50
#221 vg, #222 vg+ 1.50
#224 center crease ow vg-fn 2.00
#235 vg-fn 2.00
#243 sm pc out bk cvr edge & sev pgs fn 1.50
BLACK HOOD..#18 fn-vf 55.00
BLACK KNIGHT.(Atlas)..#3 fn 85.00
#4 tiny nick out bottom cvr ow fn 75.00
#5 sm date stamp top cvr ow fn+ 85.00
BLACK MAGIC.(1950)..#1 vf-nm (S&K) 260.00
BLACK RIDER..#9 ¼" cor off lower rt cvr ow vg+ 18.00
BLACKSTONE THE MAGICIAN..#4 ½" top sp separated ow vg+ (Blonde Phantom) 32.00
BLACK TERROR..#3 vg-fn 55.00
BLAZING SIXGUNS..#1 vg 14.00
Super Reprint #12 fair 3.50
BLONDE PHANTOM..#15 fn+ 100.00
#17 fn-nm, #18 fn-nm 130.00
#19 fn+-nm 160.00
#19 sm nick off bottom sp ow fn+ 85.00
BLONDIE..#4 g+-vg - 6.50; #129 fn 2.50
BLUE BEETLE..#51 vg-fn 70.00
BLUE BOLT..v 6 #4 fn+-nm 11.00
v 7 #2 fn-vf 10.00
v 7 #3 vy light ctr crease ow vf-nm 11.00
v 7 #11 fn+ 8.00
v 8 #8 vg+-fn 7.00
BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS..#5 fn-nm 27.00
#11 vg-fn 38.00
BOB COLT..#3 1½" cor crease ow fn+ 35.00
BONANZA..#8 nm-m 26.00
#24 1½" cor off bk cvr ow g-vg 2.50
#25 fn+-nm - 8.50; #31 fn 5.00
#36 light 5" & 3" cor creases ow fn+ 4.00
BOUNTY GUNS.(Luke Short's).FC 739 fn 7.00
BOY..#48 vg 8.00
BOY COMMANDOS..#1 vy sm tear top & bottom sp ow vf-nm 975.00
#3 neat name stamp on cvr ow vf 275.00
#4 neat, inconspicuous name stamped on cover ow vf-nm 175.00
#8 ¼" cvr tear ow vg+-fn 50.00
#10 fn-nm 95.00
BOY DETECTIVE..#3 fn-nm 25.00
BOZO THE CLOWN..FC 285 g+-vg 15.00
BRAVE & BOLD..#7 g+-vg 40.00
#16 ½" triangle out top bk cvr ow fn+-nm 75.00
#54 one ink name top cvr ow g-vg 18.00
#75 vg-fn - 4.00; #79 vg+ 6.50
#86 fn-vf 10.00
#93 ½" tear bottom cvr ow fn-nm 9.00
#95 ½" cor crease ow fn+-nm 5.00
#100 1" cor crease bk cvr ow nm 20.00
#104 fn-nm 3.50
#133 vy sm cor crease ow nm 4.50
DC SPECIAL SERIES..#8 nm-m 3.00
BRINGING UP FATHER..FC 37 ½" tear cvr edge & some pgs ow vg-fn 29.00
BROKEN ARROW..FC 855 vg-fn 6.50
THE BROWNIES..FC 436 fn+-nm 11.00
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FC 281 ¾" x 1/8" out cvr edge ow g+-vg 8.00
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#7 4½" cor crease ow fn+ 150.00
#8 vy light rust on staples & sm store name stamp bk cvr ow nm 250.00
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#11 sm A in circle stamped on rt side of cvr ow fn+-nm 175.00
#12 fn+ 120.00
BUSTER BROWN..#34 vg - 12.00; #36 g 6.00
BUSTER BUNNY..#7 - 2.50; #10 fn-nm 4.50
#10 fn - 3.00; #16 fn+-nm 5.00
BUSTER CRABBE..#12 sev vy sm tears bottom bk cvr ow fn+-nm 28.00
BUTCH CASSIDY.(Avon)..#1 sm nick out rt cvr edge ow nm 52.00
BUZ SAWYER..#1 vf-nm 50.00
#3 nm 37.00
BUZZY..#24 fn-vf - 8.50; #75 fn-nm 6.50
CAMERA..#7 3/8" cor off cvr ow vg 7.50
CAPT. AERO..v 2 #8 ½" cor off cvr & co, ow vg 11.00
CAPT. AMERICA.(Timely)..#15 1" x ½" pc tape inside cvr edge & "4x10" stamp in M of logo ow fn 310.00
#15 book appears to have been damp ow vg+ 120.00
#18 fn 310.00
#32 pencil name erased from logo ow vf-nm 425.00
CAPT. AMERICA.(Marvel)..#100 nm 285.00
#109 sm water stain lower left cvr, not noticeable on front ow fn+-nm 30.00
#109 sev creases upper rt cvr ow vf 30.00
#110 sm nick out rt cvr edge ow fn 15.00
#111 vf-nm 40.00
#113 nm - 50.00; #115 nm 15.00
#116 vf-nm - 13.00; #116 fn+-nm 10.00
#117 nm - 25.00; #117 vg+-fn 6.00
#118 vg+-fn - 4.50; #119 nm 15.00
#119 fn+-nm - 10.00; #120 fn 5.00
#121 fn+-nm - 7.00; #124 vf-nm 7.50
#124 ½" tear top cvr ow fn 3.50
#124 vg-fn - 2.50; #125 nm 9.00
#126 nm-m - 10.00; #126 fn+ 4.50
#127 nm - 10.00; #127 fn+ 4.50
#127 fn - 4.00; #129 fn 4.50
#129 vg-fn - 3.00; #130 fn+-nm 6.00
#130 ½" cvr tear at 1" cor crease ow fn-vf 4.00
#131 fn - 3.50; #132 fn+ 4.50
#133 fn - 4.00; #134 fn+-nm 6.00

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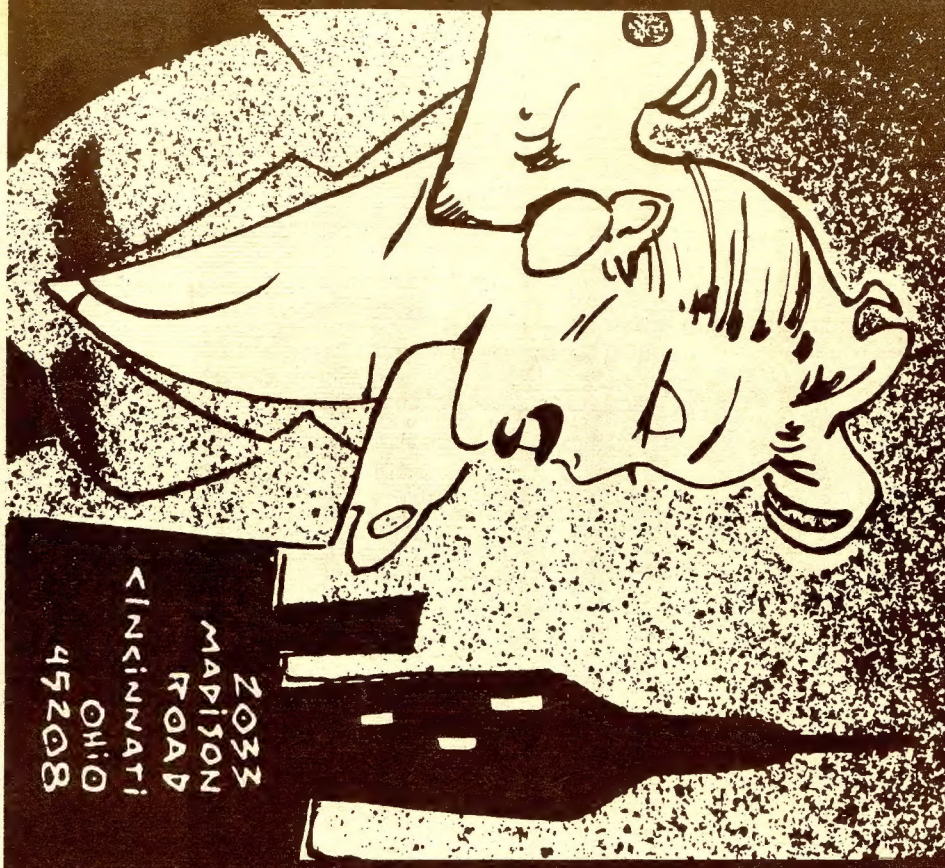

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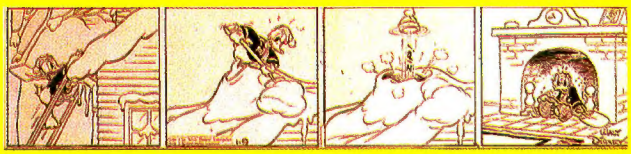

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